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LETTERS

Of the RIGHT HONOURABLE

Lady M--y W----y M-----e:

Written, during her TRAVELS in

EUROPE, ASIA AND AFRICA,

TO

Perſons of Diſtinction, Men of Letters, &c.
in different PARTS of EUROPE.

WHICH CONTAIN,

Among other CURIOUS Relations,

ACCOUNTS of the POLICY and MANNERS
of the TURKS;

Drawn from Sources that have been inacceſſible to
other Travellers.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. II.

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LETTER XXVIII.

To the Countefs of B——.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1718.

AS I never can forget the ſmalleſt of your ladyſhip's commands, my firſt buſineſs here, has been to enquire after the ſtuffs, you ordered me to look for, without being able to find what you would like. The difference of the dreſs here and at London is ſo great, the ſame ſort of things are not proper for *Caftans* and *Manteaus*. However, I will not give over my ſearch, but renew it again at Conſtantinople, though I have reaſon to believe there is nothing finer than what is to be found here, as this place is at preſent the reſidence of the court. The Grand Signior's eldeſt

daughter was married ſome few days before I came hither, and upon that occaſion the Turkiſh Ladies diſplay all their magnificence. The bride was conducted to her huſband's houſe in very great ſplendor. She is widow of the late Vizier, who was killed at Peterwaradin, though that ought rather to be called a *contract*, than a *marriage*, ſince ſhe never has lived with him; however, the greateſt part of his wealth is hers. He had the permiſſion of viſiting her in the Seraglio; and being one of the handſomeſt men in the empire, had very much engaged her affections.——When ſhe ſaw this ſecond huſband, who is at leaſt fifty, ſhe could not forbear burſting into tears. He is indeed a man of merit, and the declared favourite of the Sultan, (which they call *Moſayp*) but that is not enough to make him pleaſing in the eyes of a girl of thirteen.

The

The government here is entirely in the hands of the army. The Grand Signior, with all his abſolute power, is as much a ſlave as any of his ſubjects, and trembles at a Janizary's frown. Here is, indeed, a much greater appearance of ſubjection than amongſt us; a miniſter of ſtate is not ſpoke to, but upon the knee; ſhould a reflection on his conduct be dropt in a coffee-houſe, (for they have ſpies every where) the houſe would be raz'd to the ground, and perhaps the whole company put to the torture. No *buzzaing mobs, ſenſeleſs pamphlets, and tavern diſputes about politicks*;

A conſequential ill that Freedom draws;
A bad effect,—but from a noble cauſe.

None of our harmleſs calling names! but when a miniſter here diſpleaſes the

people, in three hours time he is dragged even from his master's arms. They cut off his hands, head and feet, and throw them before the palace-gate, with all the respect in the world; while the Sultan (to whom they all profess an unlimited adoration) sits trembling in his apartment, and dare neither defend nor revenge his favourite. This is the blessed condition of the most absolute monarch upon earth, who owns no *Law* but his *Will*.

I cannot help wishing, in the loyalty of my heart, that the Parliament would send hither a ship-load of your passive-obedient men, that they might see arbitrary government in its cleareſt strongest light, where 'tis hard to judge, whether the Prince, People or Ministers, are most miserable. I could make many reflections on this subject; but I know,

Madam,

Madam, your own good ſenſe has already furniſhed you with better than I am capable of.

I went yeſterday along with the French Ambaſſadreſs to ſee the Grand Signior in his paſſage to the Moſque. He was preceded by a numerous guard of Janizaries, with vaſt white feathers on their heads, as alſo by the *Spahis* and *Boſtangees*, (theſe are foot and horſe guards) and the Royal Gardeners, which are a very conſiderable body of men, dreſſed in different habits of fine lively colours, ſo that, at a diſtance, they appeared like a parterre of tulips. After them the Aga of the Janizaries, in a robe of purple velvet, lined with ſilver tiſſue, his horſe led by two ſlaves richly dreſſed. Next him the *Kyzlier-Aga*, (your ladyſhip knows, this is the chief guardian of the Seraglio Ladies) in a deep yellow

cloth (which ſuited very well to his black face) lined with ſables. Laſt came his *Sublimity* himſelf, arrayed in green, lined with the fur of a black Muſcovite fox, which is ſuppoſed worth a thouſand pounds ſterling, and mounted on a fine horſe, with furniture embroidered with jewels. Six more horſes richly capariſoned were led after him; and two of his principal courtiers bore, one his gold, and the other his ſilver coffee-pot, on a ſtaff; another carried a ſilver ſtool on his head, for him to ſit on.—It would be too tedious to tell your ladyſhip, the various dreſſes and turbants by which their rank is diſtinguiſhed; but they were all extremely rich and gay, to the number of ſome thouſands; ſo that perhaps there cannot be ſeen a more beautiful proceſſion. The Sultan appeared to us a handſome man of about forty, with ſomething, however, ſevere

in

in his countenance, and his eyes very full and black. He happened to ſtop under the window where we ſtood, and (I ſuppoſe being told who we were) looked upon us very attentively, ſo that we had full leiſure to conſider him. The French Ambaſſadreſs agreed with me as to his good mien. I ſee that lady very often; ſhe is young, and her converſation would be a great relief to me, if I could perſuade her to live without thoſe forms and ceremonies that make life formal and tireſome. But ſhe is ſo delighted with her guards, her four and twenty footmen, gentlemen-uſhers, &c. that ſhe would rather die than make me a viſit without them; not to reckon a coachful of attending damſels yclep'd maids of honour. What vexes me is that as long as ſhe will viſit me with a troubleſome equipage, I am obliged to do the ſame; however, our mutual

 intereſt

intereſt makes us much together. I went with her the other day all round the town, in an open gilt chariot, with our joint train of attendants, preceded by our guards, who might have ſummoned the people to ſee what they had never ſeen, nor ever perhaps would ſee again, two young Chriſtian Ambaſſadreſſes at the ſame time. Your Ladyſhip may eaſily imagine, we drew a vaſt croud of ſpectators, but all ſilent as death. If any of them had taken the liberties of our mobs upon any ſtrange ſight, our Janizaries had made no ſcruple of falling on them with their ſcymitars, without danger for ſo doing, being above law. Theſe people however (I mean the Janizaries) have ſome good qualities; they are very zealous and faithful where they ſerve, and look upon it as their buſineſs to fight for you on all occaſions. Of

this I had a very pleaſant inſtance in a village on this ſide Phillippopolis, where we were met by our domeſtic guards. I happened to beſpeak pigeons for ſupper, upon which one of my Janizaries went immediately to the *Cadi* (the chief civil officer of the town) and ordered him to ſend in ſome dozens. The poor man anſwered, that he had already ſent about, but could get none. My Janizary, in the height of his zeal for my ſervice, immediately locked him up priſoner in his room, telling him he deſerved death for his impudence, in offering to excuſe his not obeying my command; but, out of reſpect to me, he would not puniſh him but by my order. Accordingly he came very gravely to me, to aſk what ſhould be done to him; adding, by way of compliment, that if I pleaſed he would bring me his head.——This

may

may give you ſome idea of the unlimited power of theſe fellows, who are all ſworn brothers, and bound to revenge the injuries done to one another, whether at Cairo, Aleppo, or any part of the world. This inviolable league makes them ſo powerful, that the greateſt man at court never ſpeaks to them but in a flattering tone; and in Aſia, any man that is rich, is forced to enroll himſelf a Janizary to ſecure his eſtate.——But I have already ſaid enough, and I dare ſwear, dear Madam, that, by this time, 'tis a very comfortable reflection to you, that there is no poſſibility of your receiving ſuch a tedious letter but once in ſix months; 'tis that conſideration has given me the aſſurance of entertaining you ſo long, and will, I hope, plead the excuſe of, dear Madam,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Countefs of ——.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1717.

I WISH to God, dear ſiſter, that you were as regular in letting me know what paſſes on your ſide of the globe, as I am careful in endeavouring to amuſe you by the account of all I ſee here, that I think worth your notice. You content yourſelf with telling me over and over that the town is very dull: it may, poſſibly, be dull to you, when every day does not preſent you with ſomething new; but for me, that am in arrears, at leaſt two months news, all that ſeems very ſtale with you, would be very freſh and ſweet here. Pray let me into more particulars, and I will try

to

to awaken your gratitude, by giving you a full and true relation of the novelties of this place, none of which would ſurprize you more than a ſight of my perſon, as I am now in my Turkiſh habit, though I believe you would be of my opinion, that 'tis admirably becoming.——I intend to ſend you my picture; in the mean time accept of it here.

The firſt part of my dreſs is a pair of drawers, very full, that reach to my ſhoes, and conceal the legs more modeſtly than your petticoats. They are of a thin roſe coloured damaſk, brocaded with ſilver flowers. My ſhoes are of white kid leather, embroidered with gold. Over this hangs my ſmock, of a fine white ſilk gauze, edged with embroidery. This ſmock has wide ſleeves, hanging half-way down the arm, and is

cloſed

closed at the neck with a diamond button; but the shape and colour of the bosom is very well to be distinguished through it.——The *Antery* is a waist-coat, made close to the shape, of white and gold damask, with very long sleeves falling back, and fringed with deep gold fringe, and should have diamond or pearl buttons. My *Caftan*, of the same stuff with my drawers, is a robe exactly fitted to my shape and reaching to my feet, with very long strait falling sleeves. Over this is the girdle, of about four fingers broad, which all that can afford it, have entirely of diamonds or other precious stones; those, who will not be at that expence, have it of exquisite embroidery on sattin; but it must be fastened before with a clasp of diamonds.——The *Curdée* is a loose robe they throw off, or put on, according to

the weather, being of a rich brocade (mine is green and gold) either lined with ermine or ſables; the ſleeves reach very little below the ſhoulders. The headdreſs is compoſed of a cap, called *Talpock*, which is, in winter, of fine velvet embroidered with pearls or diamonds, and, in ſummer, of a light ſhining ſilver ſtuff. This is fixed on one ſide of the head, hanging a little way down with a gold taſſel, and bound on, either with a circle of diamonds (as I have ſeen ſeveral) or a rich embroidered handkerchief. On the other ſide of the head, the hair is laid flat; and here the ladies are at liberty to ſhew their fancies; ſome putting flowers, others a plume of heron's feathers, and, in ſhort, what they pleaſe; but the moſt general faſhion is, a large *Bouquet* of jewels, made like natural flowers, that is, the *buds* of pearl;

the

the *roſes* of different coloured rubies; the *jeſſamines* of diamonds; the *jonquils* of topazes, &c. ſo well ſet and enamelled, 'tis hard to imagine any thing of that kind ſo beautiful. The hair hangs at its full length behind, divided into treſſes braided with pearl or ribbon, which is always in great quantity. I never ſaw in my life, ſo many fine heads of hair. In one lady's I have counted a hundred and ten of the treſſes, all natural; but it muſt be owned that every kind of beauty is more common here than with us. 'Tis ſurpriſing to ſee a young woman that is not very handſome. They have naturally the moſt beautiful complexion in the world, and generally large black eyes. I can aſſure you with great truth, that the court of England (though I believe it the faireſt in Chriſtendom) does not contain ſo

many

many beauties as are under our protection here. They generally ſhape their eye-brows, and both Greeks and Turks have the cuſtom of putting round their eyes a black tincture, that, at a diſtance, or by candle-light, adds very much to the blackneſs of them. I fancy many of our ladies would be overjoyed to know this ſecret; but 'tis too viſible by day. They dye their nails a roſe-colour; but I own, I cannot enough accuſtom myſelf to this faſhion, to find any beauty in it.

As to their morality or good conduct, I can ſay, like Harlequin, that 'tis juſt as 'tis with you; and the Turkiſh ladies don't commit one ſin the leſs for not being Chriſtians. Now that I am a little acquainted with their ways, I cannot forbear admiring, either the exemplary diſcretion,

diſcretion, or extreme ſtupidity of all the writers that have given accounts of them. 'Tis very eaſy to ſee, they have in reality more liberty than we have. No woman, of what rank ſoever, is permitted to go into the ſtreets without two *Murlins*, one that covers her face, all but her eyes; and another, that hides the whole dreſs of her head, and hangs half way down her back. Their ſhapes are alſo wholly concealed, by a thing they call a *Ferigee*, which no woman of any ſort appears without; this has ſtrait ſleeves, that reach to their fingers ends, and it laps all round them, not unlike a riding-hood. In winter, 'tis of cloth; and in ſummer, of plain ſtuff or ſilk. You may gueſs then, how effectually this diſguiſes them, ſo that there is no diſtinguiſhing the great lady from her ſlave. 'Tis impoſſible for the moſt jea-

lous husband to know his wife, when he meets her, and no man dare touch or follow a woman in the street.

This perpetual masquerade gives them entire liberty of following their inclinations without danger of discovery. The most usual method of intrigue is, to send an appointment to the lover to meet the lady at a Jews shop, which are as notoriously convenient as our Indian-houses; and yet, even those who don't make use of them, do not scruple to go to buy penny-worths, and tumble over rich goods, which are chiefly to be found amongst that sort of people. The great ladies seldom let their gallants know who they are; and 'tis so difficult to find it out, that they can very seldom guess at her name, whom they have correspond-ed with for above half a year together.

You may eaſily imagine the number of faithful wives very ſmall in a country where they have nothing to fear from a lover's indiſcretion, ſince we ſee ſo many have the courage to expoſe themſelves to that in this world, and all the threatened puniſhment of the next, which is never preached to the Turkiſh damſels. Neither have they much to apprehend from the reſentment of their huſbands: thoſe ladies that are rich, having all their money in their own hands. Upon the whole, I look upon the Turkiſh women, as the only free people in the Empire; the very Divan pays a reſpect to them, and the Grand Signior himſelf, when a *Baſſa* is executed, never violates the privileges of the *Haram*, (or womens apartment) which remains unſearched and entire to the widow. They are Queens of their ſlaves, whom the

huſband has no permiſſion ſo much as to look upon, except it be an old woman or two that his lady chuſes. 'Tis true, their law permits them four wives, but there is no inſtance of a man of quality that makes uſe of this liberty, or of a woman of rank that would ſuffer it. When a huſband happens to be inconſtant (as thoſe things will happen) he keeps his miſtreſs in a houſe apart, and viſits her as privately as he can, juſt as 'tis with you. Amongſt all the great men here, I only know the *Tefterdar* (*i. e.* Treaſurer) that keeps a number of ſhe-ſlaves, for his own uſe, (that is, on his own ſide of the houſe, for a ſlave once given to ſerve a lady, is entirely at her diſpoſal) and he is ſpoke of as a libertine, or what we ſhould call a rake; and his wife won't ſee him, though ſhe continues to live in his houſe. Thus

you ſee, dear ſiſter, the manners of mankind do not differ ſo widely, as our voyage writers would make us believe. Perhaps, it would be more entertaining to add a few ſurpriſing cuſtoms of my own invention; but nothing ſeems to me ſo agreeable as truth, and I believe nothing ſo acceptable to you. I conclude therefore, with repeating the great truth of my being,

Dear Siſter, &c.

LETTER XXX.

To Mr. Pope.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S.

I DARE ſay you expect, at leaſt, ſomething very new in this letter, after I have gone a journey, not undertaken, by any Chriſtian, for ſome hundred years. The moſt remarkable accident that happened to me, was my being very near over-turned into the Hebrus; and, if I had much regard for the glories that one's name enjoys after death, I ſhould certainly be ſorry for having miſſed the romantic concluſion of ſwimming down the ſame river in which the muſical head of *Orpheus* repeated verſes, ſo many ages ſince:

"*Caput*

" *Caput a cervice revulſum,*
" *Gurgite cum medio, portans Oeagrius Hebrus*
" *Volveret, Euridicen vox ipſa, et frigida lingua*
" *Ah! miſeram Euridicen! anima fugiente*
" *vocabat,*
" *Euridicen toto referebant flumine ripæ.*"

Who knows but ſome of your bright wits, might have found it a ſubject affording many poetical turns, and have told the world, in an heroic Elegy, that,

As equal were our ſouls, ſo equal were our fates.

I deſpair of ever hearing ſo many fine things ſaid of me, as ſo extraordinary a death would have given occaſion for.

I am at this preſent moment writing in a houſe ſituated on the banks of the Hebrus, which runs under my chamber window. My garden is full of tall

cypreſs trees, upon the branches of which, ſeveral couple of true turtles are ſaying ſoft things to one another from morning till night. How naturally do *boughs* and *vows* come into my mind, at this minute? And muſt not you confeſs, to my praiſe, that 'tis more than an ordinary diſcretion, that can reſiſt the wicked ſuggeſtions of poetry, in a place where truth, for once, furniſhes all the ideas of paſtoral. The ſummer is already far advanced, in this part of the world; and for ſome miles round Adrianople, the whole ground is laid out in gardens, and the banks of the rivers are ſet with rows of fruit trees, under which all the moſt conſiderable Turks divert themſelves every evening, not with walking, that is not one of their pleaſures; but a ſet party of them chooſe out a green ſpot, where the ſhade is very thick,

thick, and there they ſpread a carpet, on which they ſit drinking their coffee, and are generally attended by ſome ſlave with a fine voice, or that plays on ſome inſtrument. Every twenty paces you may ſee one of theſe little companies, liſtening to the daſhing of the river; and this taſte is ſo univerſal, that the very gardeners are not without it. I have often ſeen them and their children ſitting on the banks of the river, and playing on a rural inſtrument, perfectly anſwering the deſcription of the ancient *Fiſtula*, being compoſed of unequal reeds, with a ſimple but agreeable ſoftneſs in the ſound.

Mr. *Addiſon* might here make the experiment he ſpeaks of in his travels; there not being one inſtrument of muſic among

among the Greek or Roman Statues, that is not to be found in the hands of the people of this country. The young lads generally divert themſelves with making garlands for their favourite lambs, which I have often ſeen painted and adorned with flowers, lying at their feet, while they ſung or played. It is not that they ever read Romances. But theſe are the ancient amuſements here, and as natural to them as cudgel-playing and foot-ball to our Britiſh ſwains; the ſoftneſs and warmth of the climate forbidding all rough exerciſes, which were never ſo much as heard of amongſt them, and naturally inſpiring a lazineſs and averſion to labour, which the great plenty indulges. Theſe gardeners are the only happy race of country people in Turkey. They furniſh all the city with

fruits

fruits and herbs, and ſeem to live very eaſily. They are moſt of them Greeks, and have little houſes in the midſt of their gardens, where their wives and daughters take a liberty, not permitted in the town, I mean to go unveiled. Theſe wenches are very neat and handſome, and paſs their time at their looms under the ſhade of the trees.

I no longer look upon *Theocritus* as a romantic writer; he has only given a plain image of the way of life amongſt the peaſants of his country, who, before oppreſſion had reduced them to want, were, I ſuppoſe, all employed as the better ſort of them are now. I don't doubt, had he been born a Briton, but his *Idylliums* had been filled with deſcriptions of threſhing and churning, both which are unknown here, the corn being

all

all trod out by oxen; and butter (I ſpeak it with ſorrow) unheard of.

I read over your *Homer* here, with an infinite pleaſure, and find ſeveral little paſſages explained, that I did not before entirely comprehend the beauty of: Many of the cuſtoms, and much of the dreſs then in faſhion, being yet retained. I don't wonder to find more remains here, of an age ſo diſtant, than is to be found in any other country, the Turks not taking that pains to introduce their own manners, as has been generally practiſed by other nations, that imagine themſelves more polite. It would be too tedious to you to point out all the paſſages that relate to preſent cuſtoms. But I can aſſure you, that the Princeſſes and great ladies paſs their time at their looms, embroidering veils and robes, ſurrounded by

by their maids, which are always very numerous, in the ſame manner as we find *Andromache* and *Helen* deſcribed. The deſcription of the belt of *Menelaus* exactly reſembles thoſe that are now worn by the great men, faſtened before with broad golden claſps, and embroidered round with rich work. The ſnowy veil, that *Helen* throws over her face, is ſtill faſhionable; and I never ſee half a dozen of old Baſhaws (as I do very often) with their reverend beards, ſitting baſking in the ſun, but I recollect good King *Priam* and his counſellors. Their manner of dancing is certainly the ſame that *Diana* is *ſung* to have danced on the banks of *Eurotas*. The great lady ſtill leads the dance, and is followed by a troop of young girls, who imitate her ſteps, and if ſhe ſings, make up the chorus. The tunes are

extremely

extremely gay and lively, yet with ſome-thing in them wonderfully ſoft. The ſteps are varied according to the pleaſure of her that leads the dance, but always in exact time, and infinitely more agree-able than any of our dances, at leaſt in my opinion. I ſometimes make one in the train, but am not ſkilful enough to lead; theſe are the Grecian dances, the Turkiſh being very different.

I ſhould have told you, in the firſt place, that the Eaſtern manners give a great light into many Scripture-paſſages, that appear odd to us, their phraſes be-ing commonly what we ſhould call Scrip-ture language. The vulgar Turk is very different from what is ſpoke at court, or amongſt the people of figure; who always mix ſo much Arabic and

Perſian

Perſian in their diſcourſe, that it may very well be called another language. And 'tis as ridiculous to make uſe of the expreſſions commonly uſed, in ſpeaking to a great man or lady, as it would be to ſpeak broad Yorkſhire, or Somerſetſhire, in the drawing room. Beſides this diſtinction, they have what they call the *ſublime*, that is, a ſtile proper for poetry, and which is the exact Scripture ſtile. I believe you would be pleaſed to ſee a genuine example of this; and I am very glad I have it in my power to ſatisfy your curioſity, by ſending you a faithful copy of the verſes that *Ibrahim Baſſa*, the reigning favourite, has made for the young Princeſs, his contracted wife, whom he is not yet permitted to viſit without witneſſes, though ſhe is gone home to his houſe. He is a man of wit and learning; and whether or no he is

capable

capable of writing good verſe, you may be ſure that, on ſuch an occaſion, he would not want the aſſiſtance of the beſt poets in the Empire. Thus the verſes may be looked upon as a ſample of their fineſt poetry, and I don't doubt you'll be of my mind, that it is moſt wonderfully reſembling the *Song of Solomon*, which alſo was addreſſed to a Royal Bride.

TURKISH VERSES addreſſed to the *Sultana*, eldeſt daughter of SULTAN ACHMET III.

STANZA I.

Ver. 1. *THE Nightingale now wanders in the vines;*
Her paſſion is to ſeek roſes.

2. *I went down to admire the beauty of the vines;*
The ſweetneſs of your charms has raviſh'd my ſoul.

3. *Your eyes are black and lovely*
But wild and diſdainful as thoſe of a ſtag;

STANZA II.

1. *The wiſhed poſſeſſion is delayed from day to day,*
The cruel Sultan ACHMET *will not permit me*
To ſee thoſe cheeks, more vermillion than roſes.

2. *I dare not ſnatch one of your kiſſes,*
The ſweetneſs of your charms has raviſh'd my ſoul.

3. *Your eyes are black and lovely,*
But wild and diſdainful as thoſe of a ſtag.

STANZA III.

1. *The wretched* IBRAHIM *ſighs in theſe verſes,*
One dart from your eyes has pierc'd thro' my heart.

2. *Ah! when will the hour of poſſeſſion arrive?*
Muſt I yet wait a long time?
The ſweetneſs of your charms has raviſh'd my ſoul.

3. *Ah!* SULTANA! *ſtag-ey'd—an angel amongſt angels!*
I deſire,—and, *my deſire remains unſatisfied.*
Can you take delight to prey upon my heart?

STANZA IV.

1. *My cries pierce the heavens!*
My eyes are without ſleep!
Turn to me, SULTANA*—let me gaze on thy beauty.*

2. *Adieu——I go down to the grave.*
If you call me———I return.
My heart is—hot as ſulphur;—ſigh and it will flame.

3. *Crown of my life, fair light of my eyes!*
My SULTANA*! my Princeſs!*
I rub my face againſt the earth;—I am drown'd in ſcalding tears—I rave!
Have you no compaſſion? will you not turn to look upon me?

I have taken abundance of pains to get theſe verſes in a literal tranſlation; and if you were acquainted with my interpreters, I might ſpare myſelf the trouble of aſſuring you, that they have received no poetical touches from their hands. In my opinion, (allowing for

the

the inevitable faults of a profe tranſlation into a language ſo very different) there is a good deal of beauty in them. The epithet of *ſtag-ey'd* (though the ſound is not very agreeable in Engliſh) pleaſes me extremely; and I think it a very lively image of the fire and indifference in his miſtreſſes eyes——— Monſieur *Boileau* has very juſtly obſerved, that we are never to judge of the elevation of an expreſſion in an antient author, by the ſound it carries with us; ſince it may be extremely fine with them, when, at the ſame time, it appears low or uncouth to us. You are ſo well acquainted with *Homer*, you cannot but have obſerved the ſame thing, and you muſt have the ſame indulgence for all oriental poetry. The repetitions at the end of the two firſt Stanza's are meant for a ſort of *Chorus*, and are agreeable to the

antient manner of writing. The muſic of the verſes apparently changes in the third Stanza, where the burden is altered; and I think he very artfully ſeems more paſſionate at the concluſion, as 'tis natural for people to warm themſelves by their own diſcourſe, eſpecially on a ſubject in which one is deeply concerned; 'tis certainly far more touching, than our modern cuſtom of concluding a ſong of paſſion, with a turn which is inconſiſtent with it. The firſt verſe is a deſcription of the ſeaſon of the year; all the country now being full of Nightingales, whoſe amours with roſes, is an Arabian fable, as well known here, as any part of *Ovid* amongſt us, and is much the ſame as if an Engliſh poem ſhould begin, by ſaying,——"*Now Philomela ſings.*" Or what if I turned the whole into the

ſtile

ſtile of Engliſh poetry, to ſee how it would look?

STANZA I.

"NOW Philomel renews her tender ſtrain,
"Indulging all the night her pleaſing pain;

"I ſought the groves to hear the wanton ſing,
"There ſaw a face more beauteous than the ſpring,

"Your large ſtag-eyes where thouſand glories play,
"As bright, as lively, but as wild as they.

STANZA II.

"In vain I'm promis'd ſuch a heavenly prize.
"Ah! cruel SULTAN! who delay'ſt my joys!

"While piercing charms transfix my amorous heart,
"I dare not ſnatch one kiſs, to eaſe the ſmart.

"Thoſe eyes like, &c.

STANZA III.

" Your wretched lover in theſe lines complains;
" From thoſe dear beauties riſe his killing pains.

" When will the hour of wiſh'd-for bliſs arrive?
" Muſt I wait longer?—Can I wait and live?

" Ah! bright Sultana! Maid divinely fair!
" Can you, unpitying, ſee the pains I bear?

STANZA IV.

" The Heavens relenting hear my piercing cries,
" I loath the light, and ſleep forſakes my eyes,
" Turn thee, Sultana, ere thy lover dies;

" Sinking to earth, . ſigh the laſt adieu,
" Call me, my Goddeſs, and my life renew.

" My Queen! my angel! my fond heart's deſire!
" I rave—my boſom burns with heavenly fire!
" Pity that paſſion which thy charms inſpire.

I have taken the liberty in the ſecond verſe, of following what I ſuppoſe the true ſenſe of the author, though not literally

literally expreſſed. By his ſaying, *he went down to admire the beauty of the Vines, and her charms raviſhed his ſoul*; I underſtand a poetical fiction, of having firſt ſeen her in a garden, where he was admiring the beauty of the ſpring. But I could not forbear retaining the compariſon of her eyes with thoſe of a ſtag, though perhaps the novelty of it may give it a burleſque ſound in our language. I cannot determine upon the whole, how well I have ſucceeded in the tranſlation, neither do I think our Engliſh proper to expreſs ſuch violence of paſſion, which is very ſeldom felt amongſt us. We want, alſo, thoſe compound words which are very frequent and ſtrong in the Turkiſh language.

You ſee I am pretty far gone in Oriental learning, and to ſay truth, I ſtudy

very hard. I wiſh my ſtudies may give me an occaſion of entertaining your curioſity, which will be the utmoſt advantage hoped for from them, by,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

To Mrs. S. C.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S.

IN my opinion, dear S. I ought rather to quarrel with you, for not anſwering my Nimiguen letter of Auguſt, till December, than to excuſe my not writing again till now. I am ſure there is on my ſide a very good excuſe for ſilence, having gone ſuch tireſome land-journies, though I don't find the concluſion of them ſo bad as you ſeem to imagine. I am very eaſy here, and not in the ſolitude you fancy me. The great number of Greeks, French, Engliſh and Italians, that are under our protection, make their court to me from morning till night; and I'll aſſure you,

are,

are, many of them, very fine ladies; for there is no poſſibility for a Chriſtian to live eaſily under this government, but by the protection of an Ambaſſador —and the richer they are, the greater is their danger.

Thoſe dreadful ſtories you have heard of the *Plague*, have very little foundation in truth. I own, I have much ado to reconcile myſelf to the ſound of a word, which has always given me ſuch terrible ideas; though I am convinced there is little more in it, than in a fever. As a proof of this, let me tell you, that we paſſed through two or three towns moſt violently infected. In the very next houſe where we lay (in one of thoſe places) two perſons died of it. Luckily for me, I was ſo well deceived, that I knew nothing of the matter; and

I was

I was made believe, that our ſecond cook had only a great cold. However, we left our doctor to take care of him, and yeſterday they both arrived here in good health; and I am now let into the ſecret, that he has had the *Plague*. There are many that eſcape it, neither is the air ever infected. I am perſuaded that it would be as eaſy a matter to root it out here, as out of Italy and France; but it does ſo little miſchief, they are not very ſolicitous about it, and are content to ſuffer this diſtemper, inſtead of our variety, which they are utterly unacquainted with.

A propós of diſtempers, I am going to tell you a thing, that will make you wiſh yourſelf here. The *ſmall-pox*, ſo fatal, and ſo general amongſt us, is here entirely harmleſs, by the invention of *engrafting*,

grafting, which is the term they give it. There is a ſet of old women, who make it their buſineſs to perform the operation, every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated. People ſend to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the ſmall pox; they make parties for this purpoſe, and when they are met (commonly fifteen or ſixteen together) the old women comes with a nut ſhell full of the matter of the beſt ſort of ſmall-pox, and aſks what vein you pleaſe to have opened. She immediately rips open that, you offer to her, with a large needle (which gives you no more pain than a common ſcratch) and puts into the vein, as much matter as can lie upon the head of her needle, and after that, binds up the little wound

with

with a hollow bit of ſhell, and in this manner opens four or five veins. The Grecians have commonly the ſuperſtition of opening one in the middle of the forehead, one in each arm, and one on the breaſt, to mark the ſign of the croſs; but this has a very ill effect, all theſe wounds leaving little ſcars, and is not done by thoſe that are not ſuperſtitious, who chuſe to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed. The children or young patients play together all the reſt of the day, and are in perfect health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to ſeize them, and they keep their beds two days, very ſeldom three. They have very rarely above twenty or thirty in their faces, which never mark, and in eight days time they are as well as before their illneſs. Where they are wounded, there remains running

ſores

fores during the diſtemper, which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year thouſands undergo this operation, and the French Ambaſſador ſays pleaſantly, that they take the ſmall-pox here by way of diverſion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it, and you may believe I am well ſatisfied of the ſafety of this experiment, ſince I intend to try it on my dear little ſon. I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this uſeful invention into faſhion in England, and I ſhould not fail to write to ſome of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to deſtroy ſuch a conſiderable branch of their revenue, for the good of mankind. But that diſtemper is too beneficial to them, not to expoſe to all their reſentment, the hardy

wight

wight that ſhould undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps if I live to return, I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occaſion, admire the heroiſm in the heart of,

Your friend, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXII.

To Mrs. T.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1718.

I CAN now tell dear Mrs. T——, that I am ſafely arrived at the end of my very long journey. I will not tire you with the account of the many fatigues I have ſuffered. You would rather be informed of the ſtrange things that are to be ſeen here; and a letter out of Turkey, that has nothing extraordinary in it, would be as great a diſappointment as my viſitors will receive at London, if I return thither without any rarities to ſhew them.——What ſhall I tell you of?——You never ſaw camels in your life; and perhaps the deſcription of them will appear new to you; I

can

can aſſure you, the firſt ſight of them was ſo to me; and though I have ſeen hundreds of pictures of thoſe animals, I never ſaw any that was reſembling enough to give a true idea of them. I am going to make a bold obſervation, and poſſibly a falſe one, becauſe no body has ever made it before me; but I do take them to be of the ſtag-kind; their legs, bodies, and necks, are exactly ſhaped like them, and their colour very near the ſame. 'Tis true, they are much larger, being a great deal higher than a horſe, and ſo ſwift, that, after the defeat of Peterwaradin, they far out-ran the ſwifteſt horſes, and brought the firſt news of the loſs of the battle to Belgrade. They are never thoroughly tamed; the drivers take care to tye them one to another with ſtrong ropes, fifty in a ſtring, led by an aſs, on which the

driver rides. I have ſeen three hundred in one caravan. They carry the third part more than a horſe; but 'tis a particular art to load them, becauſe of the bunch on their backs. They ſeem to me very ugly creatures, their heads being ill formed and diſproportioned to their bodies. They carry all the burdens; and the beaſts deſtined to the plough are buffaloes, an animal you are alſo unacquainted with. They are larger and more clumſy than an ox; they have ſhort thick black horns cloſe to their heads, which grow turning backwards. They ſay this horn looks very beautiful when 'tis well poliſhed. They are all black, with very ſhort hair on their hides, and have extremely little white eyes, that makes them look like devils. The country people dye their tails, and the hair of their forehead red, by way

of

of ornament. Horſes are not put here to any laborious work, nor are they at all fit for it. They are beautiful and full of ſpirit, but generally little, and not ſtrong, as the breed of colder countries; very gentle, however, with all their vivacity, and alſo ſwift and ſure-footed. I have a little white favourite, that I would not part with on any terms; he prances under me with ſo much fire, you would think that I had a great deal of courage to dare mount him; yet I'll aſſure you, I never rid a horſe ſo much at my command, in my life. My ſide-ſaddle is the firſt that was ever ſeen in this part of the world, and is gazed at with as much wonder, as the ſhip of Columbus in the firſt diſcovery of America. Here are ſome little birds, held in a ſort of religious reverence, and for that reaſon multiply prodigiouſly; *Turtles*, on the

account of their innocence; and *Storcks*, becauſe they are ſuppoſed to make every winter the pilgrimage to Mecca. To ſay truth, they are the happieſt ſubjects under the Turkiſh government, and are ſo ſenſible of their privileges, that they walk the ſtreets without fear, and generally build in the low parts of houſes. Happy are thoſe whoſe houſes are ſo diſtinguiſhed, as the vulgar Turks are perfectly perſuaded, that they will not be, that year, attacked either by fire or peſtilence. I have the happineſs of one of their ſacred neſts under my chamber-window.

Now I am talking of my chamber, I remember, the deſcription of the houſes here will be as new to you, as any of the birds or beaſts. I ſuppoſe you have read in moſt of our accounts of Turkey,

that their houſes are the moſt miſerable pieces of building in the world. I can ſpeak very learnedly on that ſubject, having been in ſo many of them; and I aſſure you, 'tis no ſuch thing. We are now lodged in a palace, belonging to the Grand Signior. I really think the manner of building here very agreeable, and proper for the country. 'Tis true, they are not, at all, ſolicitous to beautify the outſides of their houſes, and they are generally built of wood, which, I own, is the cauſe of many inconveniencies; but this is not to be charged on the ill taſte of the people, but on the oppreſſion of the government. Every houſe, at the death of its maſter, is at the Grand Signior's diſpoſal, and therefore no man cares to make a great expence, which he is not ſure his family will be the better for. All their deſign is to build a houſe com-

commodious, and that will laſt their lives; and they are very indifferent if it falls down the year after. Every houſe, great and ſmall, is divided into two diſtinct parts, which only join together by a narrow paſſage. The firſt houſe has a large court before it, and open galleries all round it, which is, to me, a thing very agreeable. This gallery leads to all the chambers, which are commonly large, and with two rows of windows, the firſt being of painted glaſs; they ſeldom build above two ſtories, each of which has galleries. The ſtairs are broad, and not often above thirty ſteps. This is the houſe belonging to the lord, and the adjoining one is called the *Haram*, that is, the ladies apartment, (for the name of Seraglio is peculiar to the Grand Signior); it has alſo a gallery running round it towards the garden, to

which

which all the windows are turned, and the ſame number of chambers as the other, but more gay and ſplendid, both in painting and furniture. The ſecond row of windows are very low, with grates like thoſe of convents, the rooms are all ſpread with Perſian carpets, and raiſed at one end of them (my chambers are raiſed at both ends) about two feet. This is the *Sopha*, which is laid with a richer ſort of carpet, and all round it a ſort of couch raiſed half a foot, covered with rich ſilk, according to the fancy or magnificence of the owner. Mine is of ſcarlet cloth with a gold fringe; round about this are placed, ſtanding againſt the wall, two rows of cuſhions, the firſt very large, and the next little ones; and here the Turks diſplay their greateſt magnificence. They are generally brocade, or embroidery of gold wire upon

white ſattin—Nothing can look more gay and ſplendid.——Theſe ſeats are alſo ſo convenient and eaſy, that I believe I ſhall never endure chairs as long as I live.——The rooms are low, which I think no fault, and the cieling is always of wood, generally inlaid or painted with flowers. They open in many places, with folding doors, and ſerve for cabinets, I think more conveniently than ours. Between the windows are little arches to ſet pots of perfume, or baſkets of flowers. But what pleaſes me beſt, is the faſhion of having marble fountains in the lower part of the room, which throw up ſeveral ſpouts of water, giving, at the ſame time, an agreeable coolneſs, and a pleaſant daſhing ſound, falling from one baſon to another. Some of theſe are very magnificent. Each houſe has a bagnio, which conſiſts generally in

two

two or three little rooms leaded on the top, paved with marble, with baſons, cocks of water, and all conveniencies for either hot or cold baths.

You will perhaps be ſurprized at an account ſo different from what you have been entertained with by the common voyage-writers, who are very fond of ſpeaking of what they don't know. It muſt be under a very particular character, or on ſome extraordinary occaſion, that a Chriſtian is admitted into the houſe of a man of quality, and their *Harams* are always forbidden ground. Thus they can only ſpeak of the outſide, which makes no great appearance; and the womens apartments are always built backward, removed from ſight, and have no other proſpect than the

gar ens,

gardens, which are enclosed with very high walls. There is none of our parterres in them; but they are planted with high trees, which give an agreeable shade, and, to my fancy, a pleasing view. In the midst of the garden is the *Chiosk*, that is, a large room, commonly beautified with a fine fountain in the midst of it. It is raised nine or ten steps, and enclosed with gilded lattices, round which, vines, jessamines, and honey-suckles, make a sort of green wall. Large trees are planted round this place, which is the scene of their greatest pleasures, and where the ladies spend most of their hours, employed by their musick or embroidery.——In the public gardens, there are public *Chiosks*, where people go, that are not so well accommodated

at

at home, and drink their coffee, ſherbet, &c. Neither are they ignorant of a more durable manner of building; their Moſques are all of free ſtone, and the public *Hanns*, or Inns, extremely magnificent, many of them taking up a large ſquare, built round with ſhops under ſtone arches, where poor artificers are lodged *gratis*. They have always a Moſque joining to them, and the body of the *Hann* is a moſt noble hall, capable of holding three or four hundred perſons, the court extremely ſpacious, and cloiſters round it, that give it the air of our colleges. I own, I think it a more reaſonable piece of charity than the founding of convents.——I think I have now told you a great deal for once. If you don't like my choice of ſubjects, tell

me

me what you would have me write upon; there is nobody more desirous to entertain you than, dear Mrs. T—,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

To the Counteſs of ——.

Adrianople, April 18, O. S.

I WROTE to you, dear ſiſter, and to all my other Engliſh correſpondents, by the laſt ſhip, and only Heaven can tell, when I ſhall have another opportunity of ſending to you; but I cannot forbear to write again, though perhaps my letter may lye upon my hands this two months. To confeſs the truth, my head is ſo full of my entertainment yeſterday, that 'tis abſolutely neceſſary, for my own repoſe, to give it ſome vent. Without farther preface I will then begin my ſtory.

I was invited to dine with the Grand *Vizier*'s lady, and it was with a great deal of pleaſure I prepared myſelf for an entertainment, which was never before given to any Chriſtian. I thought I ſhould very little ſatisfy her curioſity, (which I did not doubt was a conſiderable motive to the invitation) by going in a dreſs ſhe was uſed to ſee, and therefore dreſſed myſelf in the court habit of Vienna, which is much more magnificent than ours. However, I choſe to go *incognito*, to avoid any diſputes about ceremony, and went in a Turkiſh coach only attended by my woman, that held up my train, and the Greek lady, who was my interpreteſs. I was met, at the court door, by her black Eunuch, who helped me out of the coach with great reſpect, and conducted me through

ſeveral rooms; where her ſhe ſlaves, finely dreſſed, were ranged on each ſide. In the innermoſt, I found the lady ſitting on her ſofa, in a ſable veſt. She advanced to meet me, and preſented me half a dozen of her friends, with great civility. She ſeemed a very good woman, near fifty years old. I was ſurprized to obſerve ſo little magnificence in her houſe, the furniture being all very moderate; and, except the habits and number of her ſlaves, nothing about her appeared expenſive. She gueſſed at my thoughts, and told me, ſhe was no longer of an age to ſpend either her time or money in ſuperfluities; that her whole expence was in charity, and her whole employment praying to God. There was no affectation in this ſpeech; both ſhe and her huſband are entirely given up to devotion. He never looks

upon any other woman; and what is much more extraordinary, touches no bribes, notwithſtanding the example of all his predeceſſors. He is ſo ſcrupulous in this point, he would not accept Mr. W——'s preſent, till he had been aſſured over and over, that it was a ſettled perquiſite of his place, at the entrance of every Ambaſſador. She entertained me with all kind of civility, till dinner came in, which was ſerved, one diſh at a time, to a vaſt number, all finely dreſſed after their manner, which I don't think ſo bad as you have perhaps heard it repreſented. I am a very good judge of their eating, having lived three weeks in the houſe of an *Effendi* at Belgrade, who gave us very magnificent dinners, dreſſed by his own cooks. The firſt week they pleaſed me extremely; but, I own, I then begun to grow weary of

their

their table, and desired our own cook might add a dish or two after our manner. But I attribute this to custom, and am very much inclined to believe that an Indian who had never tasted of either, would prefer their cookery to ours. Their sauces are very high, all the roast very much done. They use a great deal of very rich spice. The soop is served for the last dish; and they have, at least, as great a variety of ragouts, as we have. I was very sorry I could not eat of as many as the good lady would have had me, who was very earnest in serving me of every thing. The treat concluded with coffee and perfumes, which is a high mark of respect; two slaves kneeling *censed* my hair, clothes, and handkerchief. After this ceremony, she commanded her slaves to play and dance, which they did with their guitars in their

hands, and ſhe excuſed to me their want of ſkill, ſaying ſhe took no care to accompliſh them in that art.

I returned her thanks, and ſoon after took my leave. I was conducted back in the ſame manner I entered, and would have gone ſtrait to my own houſe, but the Greek lady, with me, earneſtly ſollicited me to viſit the *Kahya*'s lady, ſaying, he was the ſecond officer in the Empire, and ought indeed to be looked upon as the firſt, the Grand Vizir having only the name, while he exerciſed the authority. I had found ſo little diverſion in the Vizier's *Haram*, that I had no mind to go into another. But her importunity prevailed with me, and I am extremely glad, I was ſo complaiſant. All things here were with quite another air than at the Grand Vizier's; and the

very

very houſe confeſſed the difference between an old devotee, and a young beauty. It was nicely clean and magnificent. I was met at the door by two black Eunuchs, who led me through a long gallery, between two ranks of beautiful young girls, with their hair finely plaited, almoſt hanging to their feet, all dreſſed in fine light damaſks, brocaded with ſilver. I was ſorry that decency did not permit me to ſtop to conſider them nearer. But that thought was loſt upon my entrance into a large room, or rather pavilion, built round with gilded ſaſhes, which were moſt of them thrown up, and the trees planted near them gave an agreeable ſhade, which hindered the Sun from being troubleſome. The jeſſamines and honeyſuckles that twiſted round their trunks, ſhed a ſoft perfume, increaſed by a white

marble fountain playing ſweet water in the lower part of the room, which fell into three or four baſons, with a pleaſing ſound. The roof was painted with all ſorts of flowers, falling out of gilded baſkets, that ſeemed tumbling down. On a Sofa, raiſed three ſteps, and covered with fine Perſian carpets, ſat the Kahya's lady, leaning on cuſhions of white ſattin embroidered; and at her feet, ſat two young girls about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dreſſed perfectly rich, and almoſt covered with jewels. But they were hardly ſeen near the fair *Fatima*, (for that is her name) ſo much her beauty effaced every thing I have ſeen, nay, all that has been called lovely, either in England or Germany. I muſt own, that I never ſaw any thing ſo glorioufly beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have been taken notice

of

of near her's. She ſtood up to receive me, ſaluting me, after their faſhion, putting her hand to her heart with a ſweetneſs full of majeſty, that no court breeding could ever give. She ordered cuſhions to be given me, and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honour. I confeſs, though the Greek lady had before given me a great opinion of her beauty, I was ſo ſtruck with admiration, that I could not, for ſome time, ſpeak to her, being wholly taken up in gazing. That ſurprizing harmony of features! That charming reſult of the whole! That exact proportion of body! That lovely bloom of complexion unſullied by art! The unutterable enchantment of her ſmile!—But her eyes!——Large and black, with all the ſoft languiſhment of the

blue! every turn of her face diſcovering ſome new grace.

After my firſt ſurprize was over, I endeavoured by nicely examining her face, to find out ſome imperfection, without any fruit of my ſearch, but my being clearly convinced of the error of that vulgar notion, that a face exactly proportioned, and perfectly beautiful, would not be agreeable; nature having done for her, with more ſucceſs, what *Apelles* is ſaid to have eſſayed by a collection of the moſt exact features to form a perfect face. Add to all this a behaviour ſo full of grace and ſweetneſs, ſuch eaſy motions with an air ſo majeſtic, yet free from ſtiffneſs or affectation, that I am perſuaded, could ſhe be ſuddenly tranſported upon the moſt polite throne

of

of Europe, no body would think her other than born and bred to be a Queen, though educated in a country we call barbarous. To ſay all in a word, our moſt celebrated Engliſh beauties would vaniſh near her.

She was dreſſed in a *Caftan* of gold brocade, flowered with ſilver, very well fitted to her ſhape, and ſhewing to advantage the beauty of her boſom, only ſhaded by the thin gauze of her ſhift. Her drawers were pale pink, her waiſt-coat green and ſilver, her ſlippers white ſatin, finely embroidered; her lovely arms adorned with bracelets of diamonds, and her broad girdle ſet round with diamonds; upon her head a rich Turkiſh handkerchief of pink and ſilver, her own fine black hair hanging a great length, in various treſſes, and on

one ſide of her head ſome bodkins of jewels. I am afraid you will accuſe me of extravagance in this deſcription. I think I have read ſome where, that women always ſpeak in rapture, when they ſpeak of beauty, and I cannot imagine why they ſhould not be allowed to do ſo. I rather think it a virtue to be able to admire without any mixture of deſire or envy. The graveſt writers have ſpoke with great warmth of ſome celebrated pictures and ſtatues. The workmanſhip of Heaven certainly excels all our weak imitations, and, I think, has a much better claim to our praiſe. For my part, I am not aſhamed to own, I took more pleaſure in looking on the beauteous *Fatima*, than the fineſt piece of ſculpture could have given me. She told me the two girls at her feet were her daughters, though ſhe ap-

peared

peared too young to be their mother. Her fair maids were ranged below the Sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the antient nymphs. I did not think all nature could have furniſhed ſuch a ſcene of beauty. She made them a ſign to play and dance. Four of them immediately begun to play ſome ſoft airs on inſtruments, between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had ſeen before. Nothing could be more artful, or more proper to raiſe *certain ideas*. The tunes ſo ſoft!—— The motions ſo languiſhing!——Accompanied with pauſes and dying eyes! half-falling back, and then recovering themſelves in ſo artful a manner, that I am very poſitive, the coldeſt and moſt

rigid

rigid prude upon earth, could not have looked upon them without thinking of *ſomething not to be ſpoke of*.—— I ſuppoſe you may have read that the Turks have no muſic, but what is ſhocking to the ears; but this account is from thoſe who never heard any but what is played in the ſtreets, and is juſt as reaſonable, as if a foreigner ſhould take his ideas of Engliſh muſic from the *bladder* and *ſtring*, or the *marrow-bones* and *cleavers*. I can aſſure you, that the muſic is extremely pathetic; 'tis true, I am inclined to prefer the Italian, but perhaps I am partial. I am acquainted with a Greek lady, who ſings better than Mrs. *Robinſon*, and is very well ſkilled in both, who gives the preference to the Turkiſh. 'Tis certain they have very fine natural voices, theſe were very agreeable. When the

dance

dance was over, four fair ſlaves came into the room, with ſilver cenſors in their hands, and perfumed the air with amber, aloes-wood, and other ſcents. After this, they ſerved me coffee upon their knees, in the fineſt Japan china, with *ſoucoups* of ſilver gilt. The lovely *Fatima* entertained me all this while in the moſt polite agreeable manner, calling me often *Uzelle Sultanam*, or the Beautiful Sultana, and deſiring my friendſhip with the beſt grace in the world, lamenting that ſhe could not entertain me in my own language.

When I took my leave, two maids brought in a fine ſilver baſket of embroidered handkerchiefs; ſhe beg'd I would wear the richeſt for her ſake, and gave the others to my woman and interpreteſs.

——I retired, thro' the ſame ceremonies

as before, and could not help thinking I had been ſome time in Mahomet's paradiſe, ſo much was I charmed with what I had ſeen. I know not how the relation of it appears to you. I wiſh it may give you part of my pleaſure; for I would have my dear ſiſter ſhare in all the diverſions of,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the Abbot of ——.

Adrianople, May 17, O. S.

I AM going to leave Adrianople, and I would not do it, without giving you ſome account of all that is curious in it, which I have taken a great deal of pains to ſee. I will not trouble you with wiſe diſſertations, whether or no this is the ſame city, that was anciently called *Oreſteſit* or *Oreſte*, which you know better than I do. It is now called from the Emperor *Adrian*, and was the firſt European ſeat of the Turkiſh Empire, and has been the favourite reſidence of many Sultans. MAHOMET the fourth, and MUSTAPHA, the brother of the reigning Emperor, were ſo fond of it,

that

that they wholly abandoned Conſtantinople, which humour ſo far exaſperated the Janizaries, that it was a conſiderable motive to the rebellions that depoſed them. Yet this man ſeems to love to keep his court here. I can give you no reaſon for this partiality. 'Tis true, the ſituation is fine, and the country all round very beautiful; but the air is extremely bad, and the Seraglio itſelf is not free from the ill effect of it. The town is ſaid to be eight miles in compaſs, I ſuppoſe they reckon in the gardens. There are ſome good houſes in it, I mean, large ones; for the architecture of their palaces never makes any great ſhew. It is now very full of people; but they are moſt of them ſuch as follow the court, or camp, and when they are removed, I am told 'tis no populous city. The river *Maritza* (anciently

tiently the *Hebrus)* on which it is ſituated, is dried up every ſummer, which contributes very much to make it unwholeſome. It is now a very pleaſant ſtream. There are two noble bridges built over it. I had the curioſity to go to ſee the Exchange in my Turkiſh dreſs, which is diſguiſe ſufficient. Yet I own, I was not very eaſy when I ſaw it crowded with Janizaries; but they dare not be rude to a woman, and made way for me with as much reſpect, as if I had been in my own figure. It is half a mile in length, the roof arched, and kept extremely neat. It holds three hundred and ſixty-five ſhops, furniſhed with all ſorts of rich goods, expoſed to ſale in the ſame manner as at the New Exchange in London. But the pavement is kept much neater, and the ſhops are all ſo clean, they ſeem juſt new painted.——Idle people of all

ſorts walk here for their diverſion, or amuſe themſelves with drinking coffee, or ſherbet, which is cried about as oranges and ſweet-meats are in our play-houſes. I obſerved moſt of the rich tradeſmen were Jews. That people are in incredible power in this country. They have many privileges above all the natural Turks themſelves, and have formed a very conſiderable common-wealth here, being judged by their own laws. They have drawn the whole trade of the Empire into their hands, partly by the firm union amongſt themſelves, and partly by the idle temper and want of induſtry in the Turks. Every Baſſa has his Jew, who is his "*homme d' af-*"*faires*;" he is let into all his ſecrets, and does all his buſineſs. No bargain is made, no bribe received, no merchan-diſe diſpoſed of, but what paſſes through their

their hands. They are the phyſicians, the ſtewards, and the interpreters of all the great men. You may judge how advantageous this is to a people who never fail to make uſe of the ſmalleſt advantages. They have found the ſecret of making themſelves ſo neceſſary, that they are certain of the protection of the court, whatever miniſtry is in power. Even the Engliſh, French, and Italian merchants, who are ſenſible of their artifices, are, however, forced to truſt their affairs to their negotiation, nothing of trade being managed without them, and the meaneſt amongſt them being too important to be diſobliged, ſince the whole body take care of his intereſts with as much vigour as they would thoſe of the moſt conſiderable of their members. They are many of them vaſtly rich, but they take care to make little public ſhew

of it; though they live in their houſes in the utmoſt luxury and magnificence. This copious ſubject has drawn me from my deſcription of the exchange, found-ed by *Ali Baſſa*, whoſe name it bears. Near it is the *Sherſki*, a ſtreet of a mile in length, full of ſhops of all kind of fine merchandiſe, but exceſſive dear, nothing being made here. It is covered on the top with boards to keep out the rain, that merchants may meet conveniently in all weathers. The *Beſiten* near it, is another exchange, built upon pillars, where all ſorts of horſe furniture is ſold. Glittering every where with gold, rich embroidery and jewels; it makes a very agreeable ſhew. From this place I went, in my Turkiſh coach, to the camp, which is to move in a few days to the frontiers. The Sultan is already gone to his tents, and all his court; the appear-

ance of them is, indeed, very magnificent. Thoſe of the great men are rather like palaces than tents, taking up a great compaſs of ground and being divided into a vaſt number of apartments. They are all of green, and the *Baſſa's of three Tails*, have thoſe enſigns of their power placed in a very conſpicuous manner before their tents, which are adorned, on the top, with gilded balls, more or leſs, according to their different ranks. The ladies go in coaches to ſee the camp, as eagerly as ours did to that of *Hide-Park*; but 'tis very eaſe to obſerve, that the ſoldiers do not begin the campaign with any great chearfulneſs. The war is a general grievance upon the people, but particularly hard upon the tradeſmen, now that the Grand Signior is reſolved to lead his army in perſon. Every company of them is obliged,

upon this occaſion, to make a preſent according to their ability.

I took the pains of riſing at ſix in the morning to ſee the ceremony, which did not however begin till eight. The Grand Signior was at the Seraglio window, to ſee the proceſſion, which paſſed through the principal ſtreets. It was preceded by an *Effendi*, mounted on a camel, richly furniſhed, reading aloud the *Alcoran*, finely bound, laid upon a cuſhion. He was ſurrounded by a parcel of boys, in white, ſinging ſome verſes of it, followed by a man dreſſed in green boughs, repreſenting a clean huſbandman ſowing ſeed. After him ſeveral reapers with garlands of ears of corn, as *Ceres* is pictured, with ſcythes in their hands ſeeming to mow. Then a little machine drawn by oxen, in which was a wind-

wind-mill, and boys employed in grinding corn, followed by another machine, drawn by buffalo's carrying an oven, and two more boys, one employed in kneading the bread, and another in drawing it out of the oven. Theſe boys threw little cakes on both ſides amongſt the crowd, and were followed by the whole company of bakers marching on foot, two by two, in their beſt cloaths, with cakes, loaves, paſties and pies of all ſorts on their heads, and after them two buffoons or jack-puddings, with their faces and cloaths ſmeared with meal, who diverted the mob with their antic geſtures. In the ſame manner followed all the companies of trade in the Empire; the nobler ſort, ſuch as jewellers, mercers, &c. finely mounted, and many of the pageants that repreſent their trades perfectly magnificent; amongſt which,

that of the Furriers made one of the beſt figures, being a very large machine ſet round with the ſkins of ermins, foxes, &c. ſo well ſtuffed, that the animals ſeemed to be alive, and followed by muſic and dancers. I believe they were, upon the whole, twenty thouſand men, all ready to follow his Highneſs if he commanded them. The rear was cloſed by the volunteers, who came to beg the honour of dying in his ſervice. This part of the ſhew ſeemed to me ſo barbarous, that I removed from the window upon the firſt appearance of it. They were all naked to the middle. Some had their arms pierced thorough with arrows left ſticking in them. Others had them ſticking in their heads, the blood trickling down their faces. Some ſlaſhed their arms with ſharp knives, making the blood ſpring out upon thoſe that

ſtood

ſtood there; and this is looked upon as an expreſſion of their zeal for glory. I am told, that ſome make uſe of it to advance their love; and when they are near the window, where their miſtreſs ſtands (all the women in town being veiled to ſee this ſpectacle) they ſtick another arrow for her ſake, who gives ſome ſign of approbation and encouragement to this gallantry. The whole ſhew laſted for near eight hours, to my great ſorrow, who was heartily tired, though I was in the houſe of the widow of the *Captain Baſſa* (Admiral) who refreſhed me with coffee, ſweetmeats, ſherbet, &c. with all poſſible civility.

I went two days after, to ſee the Moſque of Sultan *Selim* I. which is a building very well worth the curioſity of a traveller. I was dreſſed in my Turkiſh

habit, and admitted without ſcruple; though I believe they gueſſed who I was, by the extreme officiouſneſs of the door-keeper, to ſhew me every part of it. It is ſituated very advantageouſly in the midſt of the city, and in the higheſt part of it, making a very noble ſhow. The firſt court has four gates, and the innermoſt three. They are both of them ſurrounded with cloiſters, with marble pillars of the Ionic order finely poliſhed, and of very lively colours; the whole pavement is of white marble, and the roof of the cloiſters divided into ſeveral cupola's or domes, headed with gilt balls on the top. In the midſt of each court are fine fountains of white marble; and before the great gate of the Moſque, a portico with green marble pillars, which has five gates, the body of the Moſque being one prodigious dome.

dome. I underſtand ſo little of architecture, I dare not pretend to ſpeak of the proportions. It ſeemed to be very regular; this I am ſure of, it is vaſtly high, and I thought it the nobleſt building I ever ſaw. It has two rows of marble galleries on pillars, with marble baluſtres; the pavement is alſo marble covered with Perſian carpets. In my opinion, it is a great addition to its beauty, that it is not divided into pews, and encumbered with forms and benches like our churches; nor the pillars (which are moſt of them red and white marble) disfigured by the little tawdry images, and pictures, that give Roman Catholic churches the air of toy-ſhops. The walls ſeemed to be inlaid, with ſuch very lively colours, in ſmall flowers, that I could not imagine what ſtones had been made uſe of. But going near, I ſaw

they

they were cruſted with japan china, which has a very beautiful effect. In the midſt hung a vaſt lamp of ſilver gilt; beſides which I do verily believe, there was at leaſt two thouſand of a leſſer ſize. This muſt look very glorious when they are all lighted; but being at night, no women are ſuffered to enter. Under the large lamp is a great pulpit of carved wood gilt, and juſt by, a fountain to waſh, which you know is an eſſential part of their devotion. In one corner is a little gallery encloſed with gilded lattices for the Grand Signior. At the upper end a large *Niche*, very like an altar, raiſed two ſteps, covered with gold brocade, and ſtanding before it two ſilver gilt candleſticks, the height of a man, and in them white wax candles as thick as a man's waiſt. The outſide of the Moſque is adorned with

towers

towers vaſtly high, gilt on the top, from whence the *Imaums* call the people to prayers. I had the curioſity to go up one of them, which is contrived ſo artfully, as to give ſurprize to all that ſee it. There is but one door, which leads to three different ſtair-caſes, going to the three different ſtories of the tower, in ſuch a manner, that three prieſts may aſcend, rounding, without ever meeting each other; a contrivance very much admired. Behind the Moſque, is an Exchange full of ſhops, where poor artificers are lodged gratis. I ſaw ſeveral Derviſes at their prayers here. They are dreſſed in a plain piece of woollen, with their arms bare, and a woollen cap on their heads, like a high crowned hat without brims. I went to ſee ſome other Moſques, built much after the ſame manner, but not comparable, in point of magni-

magnificence, to this I have deſcribed, which is infinitely beyond any church in Germany or England; I won't talk of other countries, I have not ſeen. The Seraglio does not ſeem a very magnificent palace. But the gardens are very large, plentifully ſupplied with water, and full of trees; which is all I know of them, having never been in them.

I tell you nothing of the order of Mr. W——'s entry, and his audience. Theſe things are always the ſame, and have been ſo often deſcribed, I won't trouble you with the repetition. The young Prince, about eleven years old, ſits near his father when he gives audience; he is a handſome boy, but, probably, will not immediately ſucceed the Sultan, there being two ſons of Sultan MUSTAPHA (his eldeſt brother) remaining; the eldeſt

about

about twenty years old, on whom the hopes of the people are fixed. This reign has been bloody and avaritious. I am apt to believe they are very impatient to ſee the end of it. I am, Sir,

Your, &c. &c.

P. S. I will write to you again from Conſtantinople.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Abbot ——.

Conſtantinople, May 29, O. S.

I HAVE had the advantage of very fine weather all my journey, and as the ſummer is now in its beauty, I enjoyed the pleaſure of fine proſpects; and the meadows being full of all ſorts of garden flowers, and ſweet herbs, my berlin perfumed the air as it preſſed them. The Grand Signior furniſhed us with thirty covered waggons for our baggage, and five coaches of the country for my women. We found the road full of the great *Spahis* and their equipages coming out of Aſia to the war. They always travel with tents; but I choſe to lie in houſes all the way. I will not trouble

you

you with the names of the villages we paſſed, in which there was nothing remarkable, but at *Ciorli*, where there was a *Conac*, or little *Seraglio*, built for the uſe of the Grand Signior, when he goes this road. I had the curioſity to view all the apartments deſtined for the ladies of his court. They were in the midſt of a thick grove of trees, made freſh by fountains; but I was moſt ſurprized to ſee the walls almoſt covered with little diſtichs of Turkiſh verſe, writ with pencils. I made my interpreter explain them to me, and I found ſeveral of them very well turned; tho' I eaſily believed him, that they had loſt much of their beauty in the tranſlation. One was literally thus in Engliſh:

We,

We come into this world; we lodge, and we depart;
He never goes, that's lodg'd within my heart.

The reſt of our journey was through fine painted meadows, by the ſide of the ſea of *Marmora*, the antient Propontis. We lay the next night at *Selivrea*, antiently a noble town. It is now a good ſea port, and neatly built enough, and has a bridge of thirty-two arches. Here is a famous antient Greek church. I had given one of my coaches to a Greek lady, who deſired the conveniency of travelling with me; ſhe deſigned to pay her devotions, and I was glad of the opportunity of going with her. I found it an ill built edifice, ſet out with the ſame ſort of ornaments, but leſs rich, as the Roman Catholick churches. They

ſhewed

ſhewed me a ſaint's body, where I threw a piece of money; and a picture of the Virgin Mary, drawn by the hand of St. Luke, very little to the credit of his painting; but, however, the fineſt Madona of Italy, is not more famous for her miracles. The Greeks have a monſtrous taſte in their pictures, which, for more finery, are always drawn upon a gold ground. You may imagine what a good air this has; but they have no notion either of ſhade or proportion. They have a biſhop here, who officiated in his purple robe, and ſent me a candle almoſt as big as myſelf for a preſent, when I was at my lodging. We lay that night at a town called *Bujuk Cekmege*, or Great Bridge; and the night following at *Kujuk Cekmege*, or Little Bridge, in a very pleaſant lodging, formerly a monaſtery of Derviſes, having

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before it a large court, encompaſſed with marble cloiſters, with a good fountain in the middle. The proſpect from this place, and the gardens round it, is the moſt agreeable I have ſeen; and ſhews, that monks of all religions know how to chuſe their retirements. 'Tis now belonging to a *Hogia*, or Schoolmaſter, who teaches boys here. I aſked him to ſhew me his own apartment, and was ſurprized to ſee him point to a tall cypreſs tree in the garden, on the top of which was a place for a bed for himſelf, and a little lower, one for his wife and two children, who ſlept there every night. I was ſo much diverted with the fancy, I reſolved to examine his neſt nearer; but after going up fifty ſteps, I found I had ſtill fifty to go up, and then I muſt climb from branch to branch, with ſome hazard of my neck.

I thought

I thought it therefore the beſt way to come down again.

We arrived the next day at Conſtantinople; but I can yet tell you very little of it, all my time having been taken up with receiving viſits, which are, at leaſt, a very good entertainment to the eyes, the young women being all beauties, and their beauty highly improved by the high taſte of their dreſs. Our palace is in *Pera*, which is no more a ſuburb of Conſtantinople, than Weſtminſter is a ſuburb to London. All the Ambaſſadors are lodged very near each other. One part of our houſe ſhews us the Port, the City, and the Seraglio, and the diſtant hills of Aſia, perhaps, all together, the moſt beautiful proſpect in the world.

A certain French author ſays, *Conſtantinople* is twice as big as *Paris*. Mr. W——y is unwilling to own 'tis bigger than London, though I confeſs it appears to me to be ſo; but I don't believe 'tis ſo populous. The burying fields about it are certainly much larger than the whole city. 'Tis ſurprizing what a vaſt deal of land is loſt this way in Turkey. Sometimes I have ſeen burying places of ſeveral miles, belonging to very inconſiderable villages, which were formerly great towns, and retain no other mark of their antient grandeur, than this diſmal one. On no occaſion do they ever remove a ſtone that ſerves for a monument. Some of them are coſtly enough, being of very fine marble. They ſet up a pillar with a carved turbant on the top of it, to the memory of a man; and as the turbants,

by

by their different ſhapes, ſhew the quality or profeſſion, 'tis in a manner putting up the arms of the deceaſed. Beſides, the pillar commonly bears an inſcription in gold letters. The ladies have a ſimple pillar, without other ornament, except thoſe that die unmarried, who have a roſe on the top of their monument. The ſepulchres of particular families are railed in, and planted round with trees. Thoſe of the Sultans, and ſome great men, have lamps conſtantly burning in them.

When I ſpoke of their religion, I forgot to mention two particularities, one of which I had read of, but it ſeemed ſo odd to me, I could not believe it; yet 'tis certainly true; that when a man has divorced his wife, in the moſt ſolemn

manner, he can take her again upon no other terms, than permitting another man to pafs a night with her; and there are ſome examples of thoſe, who have ſubmitted to this law, rather than not have back their beloved. The other point of doctrine is very extraordinary. Any woman that dies unmarried, is looked upon to die in a ſtate of reprobation. To confirm this belief, they reaſon, that the end of the creation of woman, is to increaſe and multiply, and that ſhe is only properly employed in the works of her calling, when ſhe is bringing forth children, or taking care of them, which are all the virtues that God expects from her. And indeed, their way of life, which ſhuts them out of all public commerce, does not permit them any other. Our vulgar

notion,

notion, that they don't own women to have any ſouls, is a miſtake. 'Tis true they ſay, they are not of ſo elevated a kind, and therefore muſt not hope to be admitted into the Paradiſe appointed for the men, who are to be entertained by celeſtial beauties. But there is a place of happineſs deſtined for ſouls of the inferior order, where all good women are to be in eternal bliſs. Many of them are very ſuperſtitious, and will not remain widows ten days, for fear of dying in the reprobate ſtate of a uſeleſs creature. But thoſe that like their liberty, and are not ſlaves to their religion, content themſelves with marrying when they are afraid of dying. This is a piece of theology, very different from that, which teaches nothing to be more acceptable to God, than a vow of perpe-

tual virginity: which divinity is moſt rational, I leave you to determine.

I have already made ſome progreſs in a collection of Greek medals. Here are ſeveral profeſſed antiquaries, who are ready to ſerve any body that deſires them. But you cannot imagine how they ſtare in my face, when I enquire about them, as if no body was permitted to ſeek after medals, till they were grown a piece of antiquity themſelves. I have got ſome very valuable ones of the Macedonian Kings, particularly one of PERSEUS, ſo lively, I fancy I can ſee all his ill qualities in his face. I have a Porphyry head finely cut, of the true Greek ſculpture; but who it repreſents, is to be gueſſed at by the learned when I return. For you are not to ſuppoſe theſe

antiquaries

antiquaries (who are all Greeks) know any thing. Their trade is only to ſell; they have correſpondents at Aleppo, Grand Cairo, in Arabia and Paleſtine, who ſend them all they can find, and very often great heaps, that are only fit to melt into pans and kettles. They get the beſt price they can for any of them, without knowing thoſe that are valuable, from thoſe that are not. Thoſe that pretend to ſkill, generally find out the image of ſome Saint in the medals of the Greek cities. One of them, ſhewing me the figure of a Pallas, with a victory in her hand on a reverſe, aſſured me it was the Virgin holding a crucifix. The ſame man offered me the head of a Socrates, on a Sardonix; and to enhance the value, gave him the title of

Saint

Saint Auguſtin. I have beſpoke a mummy, which, I hope, will come ſafe to my hands, notwithſtanding the misfortune that befel a very fine one, deſigned for the King of Sweden. He gave a great price for it, and the Turks took it into their heads, that he muſt have ſome conſiderable project depending upon it. They fancied it the body of God knows who, and that the ſtate of their Empire myſtically depended on the converſation of it. Some old prophecies were remembered upon this occaſion, and the mummy committed priſoner to the Seven Towers, where it has remained under cloſe confinement ever ſince. I dare not try my intereſt in ſo conſiderable a point, as the releaſe of it; but I hope mine

will

will pafs without examination. I can tell you nothing more at prefent of this famous city. When I have looked a little about me, you fhall hear from me again. I am, Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

To Mr. Pope.

Belgrade-Village, June 17, O. S.

I HOPE, before this time, you have received two or three of my letters. I had yours but yesterday, though dated the third of February, in which you suppose me to be dead and buried. I have already let you know that I am still alive; but to say truth, I look upon my present circumstances to be exactly the same with those of departed spirits. The heats of Constantinople have driven me to this place, which perfectly answers the description of the Elysian fields. I am in the middle of a wood, consisting chiefly of fruit trees, watered by a vast number of fountains, famous for

the

the excellency of their water, and divided into many ſhady walks, upon ſhort graſs, that ſeems to me artificial; but, I am aſſured, is the pure work of nature—within view of the black-ſea, from whence we perpetually enjoy the refreſhment of cool breezes, that make us inſenſible of the heat of the ſummer. The village is only inhabited by the richeſt amongſt the Chriſtians, who meet every night at a fountain, forty paces from my houſe, to ſing and dance. The beauty and dreſs of the women, exactly reſemble the ideas of the antient nymphs, as they are given us by the repreſentations of the poets and painters. But what perſuades me more fully of my deceaſe, is the ſituation of my own mind, the profound ignorance I am in, of what paſſes among the living (which only comes to me by chance) and the great

calmneſs

calmneſs with which I receive it. Yet I have ſtill a hankering after my friends and acquaintances left in the world, according to the authority of that admirable author,

That ſpirits departed are wonderous kind
To friends and relations left behind,
Which no body can deny.

Of which ſolemn truth I am a *dead* inſtance. I think *Virgil* is of the ſame opinion, that in human ſouls there will ſtill be ſome remains of human paſſions:

——*Curæ non ipſæ in morte relinquunt.*

And 'tis very neceſſary to make a perfect Elyſium, that there ſhould be a river *Lethe*, which I am not ſo happy as to find. To ſay truth, I am ſometimes very weary of the ſinging and dancing,

ing, and ſunſhine, and wiſh for the ſmoke and impertinencies in which you toil; though I endeavour to perſuade myſelf that I live in a more agreeable variety than you do; and that *Monday*, ſetting of partridges; *Tueſday*, reading Engliſh; *Wedneſday*, ſtudying in the Turkiſh language, (in which, by the way, I am already very learned;) *Thurſday*, claſſical authors; *Friday*, ſpent in writing; *Saturday*, at my needle, and *Sunday*, admitting of viſits and hearing of muſic, is a better way of diſpoſing of the week, than, *Monday* at the drawing-room; *Tueſday*, Lady Mohun's; *Wedneſday*, at the opera; *Thurſday*, the play; *Friday*, Mrs. Chetwynd's, &c. a perpetual round of hearing the ſame ſcandal, and ſeeing the ſame follies acted over and over, which here affect me no more than they do other dead people. I can

now

now hear of diſpleaſing things with pity and without indignation. The reflection on the great gulph between you and me, cools all news that come hither. I can neither be ſenſibly touched with joy or grief, when I conſider that, poſſibly, the cauſe of either is removed, before the letter comes to my hands. But (as I ſaid before) this indolence does not extend to my few friendſhips; I am ſtill warmly ſenſible of yours and Mr. *Congreve*'s, and deſire to live in your remembrance, though dead to all the world beſide.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Lady ——.

Belgrade Village, June 17, O. S.

I HEARTILY beg your ladyſhip's pardon; but I really could not forbear laughing heartily at your letter, and the commiſſions you are pleaſed to honour me with. You deſire me to buy you a Greek ſlave, who is to be miſtreſs of a thouſand good qualities. The Greeks are *ſubjects* and not *ſlaves*. Thoſe who are to be bought in that manner, are either ſuch as are taken in war, or ſtolen by the Tartars, from Ruſſia, Circaſſia or Georgia, and are ſuch miſerable aukward poor wretches, you would not think any of them worthy to be your houſe maids. 'Tis true, that many

thouſands were taken in the *Morea*; but they have been, moſt of them, redeemed by the charitable contributions of the Chriſtians, or ranſomed by their own relations at Venice. The fine ſlaves, that wait upon the great ladies, or ſerve the pleaſures of the great men, are all bought at the age of eight or nine years old, and educated with great care to accompliſh them in ſinging, dancing, embroidery, &c. they are commonly *Circaſſians*, and their patron never ſells them, except it is as a puniſhment for ſome very great fault. If ever they grow weary of them, they either preſent them to a friend, or give them their freedom. Thoſe that are expoſed to ſale at the markets, are always either guilty of ſome crime, or ſo entirely worthleſs, that they are of no uſe at all. I am afraid you will doubt

the

the truth of this account, which, I own, is very different from our common notions in England; but it is no leſs truth for all that.—Your whole letter is full of miſtakes from one end to the other. I ſee you have taken your ideas of Turkey from that worthy author *Dumont*, who has writ with equal ignorance and confidence. 'Tis a particular pleaſure to me here, to read the voyages to the Levant, which are generally ſo far removed from truth, and ſo full of abſurdities. I am very well diverted with them. They never fail giving you an account of the women, whom, 'tis certain, they never ſaw, and talking very wiſely of the genius of the men, into whoſe company they are never admitted; and very often deſcribe *Moſques*, which they dared not even peep into. The Turks are very proud, and will not con-

verſe with a ſtranger, they are not aſſured is conſiderable in his own country. I ſpeak of the men of diſtinction; for, as to the ordinary fellows, you may imagine what ideas their converſation can give of the general genius of the people.

As to the balm of *Mecca*, I will certainly ſend you ſome; but it is not ſo eaſily got as you ſuppoſe it, and I cannot in conſcience adviſe you to make uſe of it. I know not how it comes to have ſuch univerſal applauſe. All the ladies of my acquaintance at London and Vienna, have begged me to ſend pots of it to them. I have had a preſent of a ſmall quantity (which I'll aſſure you is very valuable) of the beſt ſort, and with great joy applied it to my face, expecting ſome wonderful effect to my advantage.

advantage. The next morning the change, indeed, was wonderful; my face was ſwelled to a very extraordinary ſize, and all over as red as my Lady H——'s. It remained in this lamentable ſtate three days, during which you may be ſure I paſſed my time very ill. I believed it would never be otherwiſe; and to add to my mortification, Mr. W——y reproached my indiſcretion without ceaſing. However, my face is ſince in *ſtatu quo*; nay, I'm told by the ladies here, that 'tis much mended by the operation, which I confeſs I cannot perceive in my looking glaſs. Indeed, if one was to form an opinion of this balm from their faces, one ſhould think very well of it. They all make uſe of it, and have the loveliеſt bloom in the world. For my part, I never intend to endure the pain of it again; let my com-

plexion take its natural courſe, and decay in its own due time. I have very little eſteem for medicines of this nature; but do as you pleaſe, Madam; only remember, before you uſe it, that your face will not be ſuch as you will care to ſhew in the drawing room for ſome days after. If one was to believe the women in this country, there is a ſurer way of making one's ſelf beloved, than by becoming handſome, though you know that's our method. But they pretend to the knowledge of ſecrets, that, by way of enchantment, give them the entire empire over whom they pleaſe. For me, who am not very apt to believe in wonders, I cannot find faith for this. I diſputed the point laſt night with a lady, who really talks very ſenſibly on any other ſubject; but ſhe was downright angry with me, in that ſhe did not perceive ſhe had

had perſuaded me of the truth of forty ſtories ſhe told me of this kind; and, at laſt, mentioned ſeveral ridiculous marriages, that there could be no other reaſon aſſigned for. I aſſured her, that in England, where we were entirely ignorant of all magick, where the climate is not half ſo warm, nor the women half ſo handſome, we were not without our ridiculous marriages; and that we did not look upon it as any thing ſupernatural, when a man played the fool for the ſake of a woman. But my arguments could not convince her againſt (as ſhe ſaid) her certain knowledge. To this ſhe added, that ſhe ſcrupled making uſe of *charms* herſelf; but that ſhe could do it whenever ſhe pleaſed; and ſtaring me in my face, ſaid, (with a very learned air) that no enchantments would

have their effects upon me, and that there were ſome people exempt from their power, but very few. You may imagine how I laughed at this diſcourſe: but all the women are of the ſame opinion. They don't pretend to any commerce with the devil, but only that there are certain compoſitions adapted to inſpire love. If one could ſend over a ſhip-load of them, I fancy it would be a very quick way of raiſing an eſtate. What would not ſome ladies of our acquaintance give for ſuch merchandize? Adieu, my dear lady —— I cannot conclude my letter with a ſubject that affords more delightful ſcenes to the imagination. I leave you to figure to yourſelf, the extreme court that will be made to me, at my return, if my travels ſhould furniſh

me

me with ſuch a uſeful piece of learning. I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Mrs. T——.

Pera of Conſtantinople, Jan. 4, O. S.

I AM infinitely obliged to you, dear Mrs. T——, for your entertaining letter. You are the only one of my correſpondents that have judged right enough, to think I would gladly be informed of the news amongſt you. All the reſt of them tell me (almoſt in the ſame words) that they ſuppoſe I know every thing. Why they are pleaſed to ſuppoſe in this manner, I can gueſs no reaſon, except they are perſuaded that the breed of *Mahomet*'s pigeon ſtill ſubſiſts in this country, and that I receive ſupernatural intelligence. I wiſh I could return your goodneſs with ſome diverting

accounts

accounts from hence. But I know not what part of the ſcenes here would gratify your curioſity, or whether you have any curioſity at all, for things ſo far diſtant. To ſay the truth, I am, at this preſent writing, not very much turned for the recollection of what is diverting, my head being wholly filled with the preparations neceſſary for the increaſe of my family, which I expect every day. You may eaſily gueſs at my uneaſy ſituation. But I am, however, comforted in ſome degree, by the glory that accrues to me from it, and a reflection on the contempt I ſhould otherwiſe fall under. You won't know what to make of this ſpeech; but, in this country, 'tis more deſpicable to be married and not fruitful, than 'tis with us to be fruitful before marriage. They have a notion, that whenever a woman leaves off bringing

forth

forth children, 'tis becauſe ſhe is too old for that buſineſs, whatever her face ſays to the contrary. This opinion makes the ladies here ſo ready to make proofs of their youth, (which is as neceſſary in order to be a *received beauty*, as it is to ſhew the proofs of nobility, to be admitted *Knights of Malta)* that they do not content themſelves with uſing the natural means, but fly to all ſorts of quackeries to avoid the ſcandal of being paſt child-bearing, and often kill themſelves by them. Without any exaggeration, all the women of my acquaintance have twelve or thirteen children; and the old ones boaſt of having had five and twenty or thirty apiece, and are reſpected according to the number they have produced.

——When they are with child, 'tis their common expreſſion to ſay, *They hope God will be ſo merciful as to ſend them two*

this

this time; and when I have aſked them ſometimes, how they expected to provide for ſuch a flock as they deſire? they anſwer, that the plague will certainly kill half of them; which, indeed, generally happens without much concern to the parents, who are ſatisfied with the vanity of having brought forth ſo plentifully. The French Ambaſſadreſs is forced to comply with this faſhion as well as myſelf. She has not been here much above a year, and has lain in once, and is big again. What is moſt wonderful, is, the exemption they ſeem to enjoy from the curſe entailed on the ſex. They ſee all company the day of their delivery, and at the fortnight's end return viſits, ſet out in their jewels and new clothes. I wiſh I may find the influence of the climate in this particular. But I fear I ſhall continue an Engliſh

woman in that affair, as well as I do in my dread of fire and plague, which are two things very little feared here. Moſt families have had their houſes burnt down once or twice, occaſioned by their extraordinary way of warming themſelves, which is neither by chimnies nor ſtoves, but by a certain machine called a *Tendour*, the height of two feet, in the form of a table, covered with a fine carpet or embroidery. This is made only of wood, and they put into it a ſmall quantity of hot aſhes, and ſit with their legs under the carpet. At this table they work, read, and, very often, ſleep; and if they chance to dream, kick down the *Tendour*, and the hot aſhes commonly ſet the houſe on fire. There were five hundred houſes burnt in this manner about a fortnight ago, and I have ſeen ſeveral of the owners ſince, who ſeem

not

not at all moved at ſo common a misfortune. They put their goods into a *Bark*, and ſee their houſes burn with great philoſophy, their perſons being very ſeldom endangered, having no ſtairs to deſcend.

But having entertained you with things I don't like, 'tis but juſt I ſhould tell you ſomething that pleaſes me. The climate is delightful in the extremeſt degree. I am now ſitting, this preſent fourth of January, with the windows open, enjoying the warm ſhine of the Sun, while you are freezing over a ſad ſea-coal fire; and my chamber is ſet out with carnations, roſes, and jonquils, freſh from my garden. I am alſo charmed with many points of the Turkiſh law, to our ſhame be it ſpoken, better deſigned, and better executed than ours; particularly, the puniſhment of convicted liars (trium-

phant criminals in our country, God knows :) They are burnt in the forehead with a hot iron, when they are proved the authors of any notorious falſehoods. How many white foreheads ſhould we ſee disfigured ? How many fine gentlemen would be forced to wear their wigs as low as their eye-brows, were this law in practice with us ? I ſhould go on to tell you many other parts of juſtice, but I muſt ſend for my midwife.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Counteſs of ——.

Pera of Conſtantinople, March 10, O. S.

I HAVE not written to you, dear ſiſter, theſe many months—a great piece of ſelf-denial. But I know not where to direct, or what part of the world you are in. I have received no letter from you ſince that ſhort note of April laſt, in which you tell me, that you are on the point of leaving England, and promiſe me a direction for the place you ſtay in; but I have, in vain, expected it till now, and now I only learn from the Gazette, that you are returned, which induces me to venture this letter to your houſe at London. I had rather ten of my letters ſhould be loſt,

than you imagine I don't write; and I think it is hard fortune, if one in ten don't reach you. However, I am resolved to keep the copies, as testimonies of my inclination to give you, to the utmost of my power, all the diverting part of my travels, while you are exempt from all the fatigues and inconveniencies.

In the first place then, I wish you joy of your niece; for I was brought to bed of a daughter * five weeks ago. I don't mention this as one of my diverting adventures; though I must own, that it is not half so mortifying here as in England; there being as much difference, as there is between a little cold in the head, which sometimes happens here,

* The present Countess of Bute.

and

and the conſumption coughs ſo common in London. No body keeps their houſe a month for lying-in; and I am not ſo fond of any of our cuſtoms, as to retain them when they are not neceſſary. I returned my viſits at three weeks end, and about four days ago croſſed the ſea, which divides this place from Conſtantinople, to make a new one, where I had the good fortune to pick up many curioſities. I went to ſee the Sultana *Haſiten*, favourite of the late Emperor Muſtapha, who, you know, (or perhaps you don't know) was depoſed by his brother, the reigning Sultan, and died a few weeks after, being poiſoned, as it was generally believed. This lady, was immediately after his death, ſaluted with an abſolute order to leave the Seraglio, and chooſe herſelf a huſband among the great men at the Porte. I ſuppoſe you may

imagine her overjoyed, at this propoſal ——Quite the contrary.——Theſe women, who are called and eſteem themſelves Queens, look upon this liberty, as the greateſt diſgrace and affront that can happen to them. She threw herſelf at the Sultan's feet, and begged him to poignard her, rather than uſe his brother's widow with that contempt. She repreſented to him, in agonies of ſorrow, that ſhe was privileged from this misfortune, by having brought five princes into the Ottoman family; but all the boys being dead, and only one girl ſurviving, this excuſe was not received, and ſhe was compelled to make her choice. She choſe *Bekir Effendi*, then ſecretary of ſtate, and above four-ſcore years old, to convince the world that ſhe firmly intended to keep the vow ſhe had made, of never ſuffering a ſecond

huſband to approach her bed; and ſince ſhe muſt honour ſome ſubject ſo far, as to be called his wife, ſhe would chuſe him, as a mark of her gratitude, ſince it was he that had preſented her at the age of ten years to her laſt lord. But ſhe never permitted him to pay her one viſit; though it is now fifteen years ſhe has been in his houſe, where ſhe paſſes her time in uninterrupted mourning, with a conſtancy very little known in Chriſtendom, eſpecially in a widow of one and twenty, for ſhe is now but thirty-ſix. She has no black Eunuchs for her guard, her huſband being obliged to reſpect her as a Queen, and not to enquire at all, into what is done in her apartment.

I was led into a large room, with a Sofa the whole length of it, adorned

with white marble pillars like a *Ruelle*, covered with pale blue figured velvet, on a ſilver ground, with cuſhions of the ſame, where I was deſired to repoſe till the Sultana appeared, who had contrived this manner of reception to avoid riſing up at my entrance, though ſhe made me an inclination of her head, when I roſe up to her. I was very glad to obſerve a lady that had been diſtinguiſhed by the favour of an Emperor, to whom beauties were, every day, preſented from all parts of the world. But ſhe did not ſeem to me, to have ever been half ſo beautiful, as the fair *Fatima* I ſaw at Adrianople; though ſhe had the remains of a fine face, more decayed by ſorrow than time. But her dreſs was ſomething ſo ſurprizingly rich, that I cannot forbear deſcribing it to you. She wore a veſt called *Dualma*, which dif-

fers

fers from a Caftan by longer ſleeves, and folding over at the bottom. It was of purple cloth, ſtrait to her ſhape, and thick ſet, on each ſide down to her feet and round the ſleeves, with pearls of the beſt water, of the ſame ſize as their buttons commonly are. You muſt not ſuppoſe that I mean as large as thoſe of my Lord ———, but about the bigneſs of a pea; and to theſe buttons, large loops of diamonds, in the form of thoſe gold loops, ſo common on birth-day coats. This habit was tied, at the waiſt, with two large taſſels of ſmaller pearls, and round the arms embroidered with large diamonds. Her ſhift was faſtned, at the bottom, with a great diamond, ſhaped like a lozenge; her girdle, as broad as the broadeſt Engliſh ribband, entirely covered with diamonds. Round

her neck ſhe wore three chains, which reached to her knees; one of large pearl, at the bottom of which hung a fine coloured emerald as big as a turkey-egg; another, conſiſting of two hundred emeralds, cloſe joined together, of the moſt lively green, perfectly matched, every one as large as a half-crown piece, and as thick as three crown pieces, and another of ſmall emeralds perfectly round. But her ear-rings eclipſed all the reſt. They were two diamonds ſhaped exactly like pears, as large as a big hazle-nut. Round her *Talpoche* ſhe had four ſtrings of pearl—the whiteſt and moſt perfect in the world, at leaſt enough to make four necklaces, every one as large as the Ducheſs of Marlborough's, and of the ſame ſhape, faſtened with two roſes, conſiſting

of

of a large ruby for the middle ſtone, and round them twenty drops of clean diamonds to each. Beſides this, her head-dreſs was covered with bodkins of emeralds and diamonds. She wore large diamond bracelets, and had five rings on her fingers (except Mr. Pitt's) the largeſt I ever ſaw in my life. 'Tis for jewellers to compute the value of theſe things; but, according to the common eſtimation of jewels in our part of the world, her whole dreſs muſt be worth a hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. This I am ſure of, that no European Queen has half the quantity, and the Empreſs's jewels, though very fine, would look very mean near hers. She gave me a dinner of fifty diſhes of meat, which (after their faſhion) were placed on the table but one at a time, and was extremely

tremely tedious. But the magnificence of her table anſwered very well to that of her dreſs. The knives were of gold, and the hafts ſet with diamonds. But the piece of luxury which grieved my eyes, was the table-cloth and napkins, which were all tiffany embroidered with ſilk and gold, in the fineſt manner, in natural flowers. It was with the utmoſt regret that I made uſe of theſe coſtly napkins, which were as finely wrought as the fineſt handkerchiefs that ever came out of this country. You may be ſure, that they were entirely ſpoiled before dinner was over. The *ſherbet* (which is the liquor they drink at meals) was ſerved in china bowls; but the covers and ſalvers maſſy gold. After dinner, water was brought in gold baſons, and towels of the ſame kind with the napkins,

kins, which I very unwillingly wiped my hands upon, and coffee was ſerved in china with gold *Soucoups* *.

The Sultana ſeemed in a very good humour, and talked to me with the utmoſt civility. I did not omit this opportunity of learning all that I poſſibly could of the *Seraglio*, which is ſo entirely unknown amongſt us. She aſſured me that the ſtory of the Sultan's *throwing a handkerchief*, is altogether fabulous; and the manner, upon that occaſion, no other than this: He ſends the *Kyſlir Aga*, to ſignify to the lady the honour he intends her. She is immediately complimented upon it by the others, and led to the bath, where ſhe is perfumed and dreſſed in the moſt magnificent and be-

* Saucers.

coming

coming manner. The Emperor precedes his visit by a royal present, and then comes into her apartment: neither is there any such thing as her creeping in at the bed's foot. She said, that the first he made choice of, was always after the first in rank, and not the mother of the eldest son, as other writers would make us believe. Sometimes the Sultan diverts himself in the company of all his ladies who stand in a circle round him. And she confessed, they were ready to die with envy and jealousy of the *happy she*, that he distinguished by any appearance of preference. But this seemed to me neither better nor worse than the circles in most courts, where the glance of the monarch is watched, and every smile is waited for with impatience, and envied by those who cannot obtain it.

She

She never mentioned the Sultan without tears in her eyes, yet ſhe ſeemed very fond of the diſcourſe. "My paſt "happineſs, *ſaid ſhe*, appears a dream "to me. Yet I cannot forget that I "was beloved by the greateſt and moſt "lovely of mankind. I was choſen "from all the reſt, to make all his cam- "paigns with him; and I would not "ſurvive him, if I was not paſſionately "fond of the Princeſs my daughter. "Yet all my tenderneſs for her was "hardly enough to make me preſerve "my life. When I left him, I paſſed "a whole twelve-month without ſeeing "the light. Time has ſoftened my "deſpair; yet I now paſs ſome days "every week in tears, devoted to the "memory of my Sultan." There was no affectation in theſe words. It was eaſy to ſee ſhe was in a deep melancholy,

though

though her good humour made her willing to divert me.

She asked me to walk in her garden, and one of her slaves immediately brought her a *Pellice* of rich brocade lined with sables. I waited on her into the garden, which had nothing in it remarkable but the fountains; and from thence, she shewed me all her apartments. In her bed-chamber, her toilet was displayed, consisting of two looking glasses, the frames covered with pearls, and her night *Talpoche* set with bodkins of jewels, and near it three vests of fine sables, every one of which is at least worth a thousand dollars (two hundred pounds English money.) I don't doubt but these rich habits were purposely placed in sight, though they seemed negligently thrown on the Sofa. When I took

I took my leave of her, I was complimented with perfumes as at the Grand Vizier's, and preſented with a very fine embroidered handkerchief. Her ſlaves were to the number of thirty, beſides ten little ones, the eldeſt not above ſeven years old. Theſe were the moſt beautiful girls I ever ſaw, all richly dreſſed; and I obſerved that the Sultana took a great deal of pleaſure in theſe lovely children, which is a vaſt expence; for there is not a handſome girl of that age, to be bought under a hundred pounds ſterling. They wore little garlands of flowers, and their own hair, braided, which was all their head dreſs; but their habits were all of gold ſtuffs. Theſe ſerved her coffee kneeling; brought water when ſhe waſhed, &c.——'Tis a great part of the buſineſs of the older ſlaves to take care of theſe young girls,

to learn them to embroider, and to ſerve them as carefully as if they were children of the family. Now do you imagine I have entertained you, all this while, with a relation that has, at leaſt, received many embelliſhments from my hand? This, you will ſay, is but too like the Arabian Tales—Theſe embroidered napkins! and a jewel as large as a turkey's egg?———You forget, dear ſiſter, thoſe very tales were written by an author of this country, and (excepting the enchantments) are a real repreſentation of the manners here. We travellers are in very hard circumſtances. If we ſay nothing but what has been ſaid before us, *we are dull, and we have obſerved nothing*. If we tell any thing new, we are laughed at as *fabulous and romantic*, not allowing either for the difference of ranks, which afford diffe-

rence

rence of company, or more curiosity, or the change of customs that happen every twenty years in every country. But the truth is, people judge of travellers, exactly with the same candour, good nature, and impartiality, they judge of their neighbours upon all occasions. For my part, if I live to return amongst you, I am so well acquainted with the morals of all my dear friends and acquaintances, that I am resolved to tell them nothing at all to avoid the imputation (which their charity would certainly incline them to) of my telling too much. But I depend upon your knowing me enough, to believe whatever I seriously assert for truth; though I give you leave to be surprized at an account so new to you. But what would you say, if I told you, that I

have been in a *Haram*, where the winter apartment was wainſcoted with inlaid work of mother of pearl, ivory of different colours, and olive wood, exactly like the little boxes, you have ſeen brought out of this country; and in whoſe rooms deſigned for ſummer, the walls are all cruſted with Japan china, the roofs gilt, and the floors ſpread with the fineſt Perſian carpets? Yet there is nothing more true; ſuch is the palace of my lovely friend, the fair *Fatima*, whom I was acquainted with at *Adrianople*. I went to viſit her yeſterday; and if poſſible, ſhe appeared to me handſomer than before. She met me at the door of her chamber, and, giving me her hand with the beſt grace in the world; You chriſtian ladies (ſaid ſhe with a ſmile, that made her as beautiful as an angel) have

have the reputation of inconſtancy, and I did not expect, whatever goodneſs you expreſſed for me at Adrianople, that I ſhould ever ſee you again. But I am now convinced that I have really the happineſs of pleaſing you; and if you knew how I ſpeak of you amongſt our ladies, you would be aſſured, that you do me juſtice in making me your friend. She placed me in the corner of the Sofa, and I ſpent the afternoon in her converſation, with the greateſt pleaſure in the world. ——The Sultana *Hafiten*, is what one would naturally expect to find a Turkiſh lady, willing to oblige, but not knowing how to go about it; and 'tis eaſy to ſee in her manner, that ſhe has lived excluded from the world. But *Fatima* has all the politeneſs and good breeding of a court, with an air that inſpires at

once, reſpect and tenderneſs; and now that I underſtand her language, I find her wit as agreeable as her beauty. She is very curious after the manners of other countries, and has not the partiality for her own, ſo common to little minds. A Greek that I carried with me, who had never ſeen her before (nor could have been admitted now, if ſhe had not been in my train) ſhewed that ſurprize at her beauty and manner, which is unavoidable at the firſt ſight, and ſaid to me in Italian,—— "*This is no Turkiſh lady, ſhe is certainly ſome Chriſtian.*"—— *Fatima* gueſſed ſhe ſpoke of her, and aſked what ſhe ſaid. I would not have told her, thinking ſhe would have been no better pleaſed with the compliment, than one of our court beauties to be told, ſhe had the air of a Turk.

But the Greek lady told it to her, and ſhe ſmiled, ſaying, *It is not the firſt time I have heard ſo; my mother was a Poloneze, taken at the ſiege of Caminiec; and my father uſed to rally me, ſaying, he believed his Chriſtian wife had found ſome Chriſtian gallant; for that I had not the air of a Turkiſh girl.*——I aſſured her, that if all the Turkiſh ladies were like her, it was abſolutely neceſſary to confine them from public view for the repoſe of mankind; and proceeded to tell her, what a noiſe ſuch a face as hers would make in London or Paris. *I can't believe you*, replied ſhe agreeably, *if beauty was ſo much valued in your country, as you ſay, they would never have ſuffered you to leave it.*

——Perhaps, dear ſiſter, you laugh at my vanity in repeating this compli-

ment, but I only do it, as I think it very well turned, and give it you as an inſtance of the ſpirit of her converſation. Her houſe was magnificently furniſhed, and very well fancied; her winter rooms being furniſhed with figured velvet on gold grounds, and, thoſe for ſummer, with fine Indian quilting embroidered with gold. The houſes of the great Turkiſh ladies are kept clean with as much nicety as thoſe in Holland. This was ſituated in a high part of the town; and from the window of her ſummer apartment we had the proſpect of the ſea, the iſlands and the Aſian mountains.——— My letter is inſenſibly grown ſo long, I am aſhamed of it. This is a very bad ſymptom. 'Tis well if I don't degenerate into a down right ſtory-

ſtory-teller. It may be, our proverb, that *knowledge is no burden*, may be true, as to one's ſelf; but knowing too much, is very apt to make us troubleſome to other people.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XL.

To the Lady ——.

Pera, March 16, O. S.

I AM extremely pleaſed, my dear lady, that you have, at length, found a commiſſion for me, that I can anſwer without diſappointing your expectations; though I muſt tell you, that it is not ſo eaſy as perhaps you think it; and that, if my curioſity had not been more diligent than any other ſtranger's has ever yet been, I muſt have anſwered you with an excuſe, as I was forced to do, when you deſired me to buy you a Greek ſlave. I have got for you, as you deſire, a Türkiſh love-letter,

which

which I have put into a little box, and ordered the captain of the *Smyrniote* to deliver it to you with this letter. The tranſlation of it is literally as follows: The firſt piece you ſhould pull out of the purſe, is a little Pearl, which is in Turkiſh called *Ingi*, and muſt be underſtood in this manner:

Ingi, | *Senſin Uzellerin gingi*
Pearl, | Faireſt of the young.
Caremfil, | *Caremfilſen cararen yōk*
Clove, | *Congē gulſum timarin yōk*
Benſeny chok than ſeverim
Senin benden, haberin yōk

You are as ſlender as this clove!
You are an unblown roſe!
I have long loved you, and you have not known it!

Pul, | *Derdime derman bul*
Jonquil, | Have pity on my paſſion!

Kibát,

Kibát, | *Birlerum ſahāt ſahūt*
Paper, | I faint every hour!

Ermŭs, | *Ver bizé bir umut*
Pear, | Give me ſome hope.

Jabun, | *Derdinden oldum zabūn*
Soap, | I am ſick with love.

Chemur, | *Ben Olijim-ſize umūr*
Coal, | May I die, and all my years be yours!

Gul, | *Ben aglarum ſen gul*
A roſe, | May you be pleaſed, and your ſorrows mine!

Haſir, | *Oliim ſana yazir*
A ſtraw, | Suffer me to be your ſlave.

Jó hó, | *Uſtunē bulunmāz pahū*
Cloth, | Your price is not to be found.

Tartſin, | *Sen ghel ben chekeim ſenin hargin*
Cinamon, | But my fortune is yours.

Girō, | *Eſking-ilen oldum ghirā*
A match, | I burn, I burn! my flame conſumes me!

Sirma,

Sirma, | *Uzunu benden ā yirmā*
Goldthread, | Don't turn away your face.

Satch, | *Bazmazun tatch*
Hair, | Crown of my head!

Uzum, | *Benīm iki Guzum*
Grape, | My eyes!

Til, | *Ulugorum tez ghel*
Gold Wire, | I die——come quickly.

And by way of poſtſcript:

Beber, | *Bize bir dogm haber*
Pepper. | Send me an anſwer.

You ſee this letter is all in verſe, and I can aſſure you, there is as much fancy ſhewn in the choice of them, as in the moſt ſtudied expreſſions of our letters; there being, I believe, a million of verſes deſigned for this uſe. There is no colour, no flower, no weed, no fruit,

fruit, herb, pebble, or feather, that has not a verſe belonging to it; and you may quarrel, reproach, or ſend letters of paſſion, friendſhip, or civility, or even of news, without ever inking your fingers.

I fancy you are now wondering at my profound learning; but alas, dear madam, I am almoſt fallen into the misfortune ſo common to the ambitious; while they are employed on diſtant inſignificant conqueſts abroad, a rebellion ſtarts up at home;——I am in great danger of loſing my Engliſh. I find 'tis not half ſo eaſy to me to write in it, as it was a twelvemonth ago. I am forced to ſtudy for expreſſions, and muſt leave off all other languages, and try to learn my mother tongue.——Human underſtanding is as much limited as human power,

power, or human ſtrength. The memory can retain but a certain number of images; and 'tis as impoſſible for one human creature to be perfect maſter of ten different languages, as to have, in perfect ſubjection, ten different kingdoms, or to fight againſt ten men at a time. I am afraid I ſhall at laſt know none as I ſhould do. I live in a place, that very well repreſents the Tower of Babel; in Pera they ſpeak *Turkiſh*, *Greek*, *Hebrew*, *Armenian*, *Arabic*, *Perſian*, *Ruſſian*, *Sclavonian*, *Walachiam*, *German*, *Dutch*, *French*, *Engliſh*, *Italian*, *Hungarian*; and what is worſe, there are ten of theſe languages ſpoken in my own family. My grooms are *Arabs*, my footmen *French*, *Engliſh*, and *Germans*; my nurſe an *Armenian*; my houſe maids *Ruſſians*; half a dozen other ſervants *Greeks*; my ſteward an *Italian*; my Janizaries

nizaries *Turks*; ſo that I live in the perpetual hearing of this medley of ſounds, which produces a very extraordinary effect upon the people that are born here; for they learn all theſe languages at the ſame time, and without knowing any of them well enough to write or read in it. There are very few men, women, or even children here, that have not the ſame compaſs of words in five or ſix of them. I know myſelf, ſeveral infants of three or four years old, that ſpeak Italian, French, Greek, Turkiſh, and Ruſſian, which laſt they learn of their nurſes, who are generally of that country. This ſeems almoſt incredible to you, and is, in my mind, one of the moſt curious things in this country, and takes off very much from the merit of our ladies, who ſet up for ſuch extraordinary geniuſes upon the credit of

ſome

ſome ſuperficial knowledge of French and Italian.

As I prefer Engliſh to all the reſt, I am extreamly mortified at the daily decay of it in my head, where, I'll aſſure you (with grief of heart) it is reduced to ſuch a ſmall number of words, I cannot recollect any tolerable phraſe to conclude my letter with, and am forced to tell your ladyſhip very bluntly, that I am

Your faithful humble ſervant.

LETTER XLI.

To the Counteſs of B———.

AT length I have heard from my dear lady B———, for the firſt time. I am perſuaded you have had the goodneſs to write before, but I have had the ill fortune to loſe your letters. Since my laſt, I have ſtayed quietly at Conſtantinople, a city that I ought in conſcience to give your ladyſhip a right notion of, ſince I know you can have none but what is partial and miſtaken from the writings of travellers. 'Tis certain, there are many people that paſs years here in *Pera*, without having ever ſeen it, and yet they all pretend to deſcribe it. *Pera*, *Tophana*, and *Galata*, wholly inhabited by French Chriſtians (and which, toge-

ther,

ther, make the appearance of a very fine town) are divided from it by the ſea, which is not above half ſo broad as the broadeſt part of the Thames; but the Chriſtian men are loath to hazard the adventures they ſometimes meet with amongſt the *Levents* or Seamen (worſe monſters than our watermen) and the women muſt cover their faces to go there, which they have a perfect averſion to do. 'Tis true, they wear veils in Pera, but they are ſuch as only ſerve to ſhew their beauty to more advantage, and would not be permitted in Conſtantinople. Theſe reaſons deter almoſt every creature from ſeeing it; and the French Ambaſſadreſs will return to France (I believe) without ever having been there. You'll wonder, Madam, to hear me add, that I have been there very often. The *Aſmack*, or Turkiſh veil, is become not

only very eaſy, but agreeable to me; and if it was not, I would be content to endure ſome inconveniency to gratify a paſſion that is become ſo powerful with me, as curioſity. And indeed, the pleaſure of going in a barge to Chelſea, is not comparable to that of rowing upon the canal of the ſea here, where for twenty miles together down the *Boſphorus*, the moſt beautiful variety of proſpects preſent themſelves. The Aſian ſide is covered with fruit trees, villages, and the moſt delightful landſkips in nature; on the European, ſtands Conſtantinople, ſituated on ſeven hills.—The unequal heights make it ſeem as large again as it is (tho' one of the largeſt cities in the world) ſhewing an agreeable mixture of gardens, pine and cypreſs trees, palaces, moſques, and publick buildings, raiſed one above another, with as much beauty

and

and appearance of ſymmetry as your ladyſhip ever ſaw in a cabinet adorned by the moſt ſkilful hands, where jars ſhew themſelves above jars, mixed with caniſters, babies, and candleſticks. This is a very odd compariſon; but it gives me an exact idea of the thing. I have taken care to ſee as much of the Seraglio as is to be ſeen. It is on a point of land running into the ſea; a palace of prodigious extent, but very irregular. The gardens take in a large compaſs of ground, full of high cypreſs trees, which is all I know of them. The buildings are all of white ſtone, headed on top, with gilded turrets and ſpires, which look very magnificent; and indeed, I believe there is no Chriſtian King's palace half ſo large. There are ſix large courts in it, all built round and ſet with trees, having galleries of ſtone; one of thoſe for the

guard, another for the ſlaves, another for the officers of the kitchen, another for the ſtables, the fifth for the Divan, and the ſixth for the apartment deſtined for audiences. On the ladies ſide there are, at leaſt, as many more, with diſtinct courts belonging to their eunuchs and attendants, their kitchens, &c.

The next remarkable ſtructure is that of St. *Sophia*, which 'tis very difficult to ſee. I was forced to ſend three times to the *Caimairan*, (the Governor of the Town) and he aſſembled the chief *Effendi*'s or heads of the law, and inquired of the *Mufti*, whether it was lawful to permit it. They paſſed ſome days in this important debate; but, I inſiſting on my requeſt, permiſſion was granted. I can't be informed why the Turks are more delicate on the ſubject of this Moſque,

than

than on any of the others, where, what Chriſtian pleaſes may enter without ſcruple. I fancy they imagine that, having been once conſecrated, people, on pretence of curioſity, might prophane it with prayers, particularly to thoſe Saints, who are ſtill very viſible in Moſaic work, and no other way defaced but by the decays of time; for it is abſolutely falſe tho' ſo univerſally aſſerted, that the Turks defaced all the images that they found in the city. The dome of St. *Sophia* is ſaid to be one hundred and thirteen foot diameter, built upon arches, ſuſtained by vaſt pillars of marble, the pavement and ſtair-caſe marble. There are two rows of galleries ſupported with pillars of parti-coloured marble, and the whole roof moſaic work, part of which decays very faſt, and drops down. They preſented me a handful of it; the compoſition

ſeems to me a ſort of glaſs, or that paſte with which they make counterfeit jewels. They ſhew here the tomb of the Emperor *Conſtantine*, for which they have a great veneration.

This is a dull imperfect deſcription of this celebrated building; but I underſtand architecture ſo little, that I am afraid of talking nonſenſe in endeavouring to ſpeak of it particularly. Perhaps I am in the wrong, but ſome Turkiſh Moſques pleaſe me better. That of Sultan *Solyman* is an exact ſquare, with four fine towers in the angles; in the midſt is a noble *Cupola* ſupported with beautiful marble pillars; two leſſer at the ends, ſupported in the ſame manner; the pavement and gallery round the Moſque, of marble; under the great cupola is a fountain adorned with ſuch fine coloured

pillars,

pillars, that I can hardly think them natural marble; on one ſide is the pulpit of white marble, and on the other the little gallery for the Grand Signior. A fine ſtair-caſe leads to it, and it is built up with gilded lattices. At the upper end is a ſort of altar, where the name of God is written; and, before it, ſtand two candleſticks, as high as a man, with wax candles as thick as three flambeaux. The pavement is ſpread with fine carpets, and the Moſque illuminated with a vaſt number of lamps. The court leading to it is very ſpacious, with galleries of marble of green columns, covered with twenty-eight leaded cupola's on two ſides, and a fine fountain of baſons in the midſt of it.

This deſcription may ſerve for all the Moſques in Conſtantinople. The mo-

del is exactly the same, and they only differ in largeness and thickness of materials. That of the Sultana VALIDA, is the largest of all, built entirely of marble, the most prodigious, and I think the most beautiful structure I ever saw, be it spoke to the honour of our sex, for it was founded by the mother of MAHOMET the fourth. Between friends, *Paul*'s *Church* would make a pitiful figure near it; as any of our squares would do, near the *Atlerdan*, or place of horses, (*at* signifying a horse in Turkish.) This was the *Hippodrome*, in the reign of the Greek Emperors. In the midst of it is a brazen column of three serpents twisted together, with their mouths gaping. 'Tis impossible to learn why so odd a pillar was erected; the Greeks can tell nothing but fabulous legends when they are asked the meaning of it, and there is

no ſign of its having ever had any inſcription. At the upper end is an obeliſk of porphyry, probably brought from Egypt, the hieroglyphicks all very entire, which I look upon as mere antient puns. It is placed on four little brazen pillars, upon a pedeſtal of ſquare free ſtone, full of figures in bas-relief on two ſides; one ſquare repreſenting a battle, another an aſſembly. The others have inſcriptions in Greek and Latin; the laſt I took in my pocket-book, and it is as follows.

" *Difficilis quondam, Dominis parere Serenis*
" *Juſſus, et extinctis palmam portare Tyrannis*
" *Omnia Theodoſio cedunt, ſobolique perenni.*"

Your Lord will interpret theſe lines. Don't fancy they are a love-letter to him.

All

All the figures have their heads on; and I cannot forbear reflecting again on the impudence of authors, who all say they have not; but I dare swear the greateſt part of them never ſaw them; but took the report from the Greeks, who reſiſt, with incredible fortitude, the conviction of their own eyes, whenever they have invented lies to the diſhonour of their enemies. Were you to believe them, there is nothing worth ſeeing in Conſtantinople, but *Sancta Sophia*, tho' there are ſeveral larger, and in my opinion, more beautiful Moſques in that city. That of Sultan *Achmet*, has this particularity, that its gates are of braſs. In all theſe Moſques there are little chapels, where are the tombs of the founders and their families, with wax candles burning before them.

The *Exchanges* are all noble buildings, full of fine alleys, the greateſt part ſupported with pillars, and kept wonderfully neat. Every trade has its diſtinct alley, where the merchandize is diſpoſed in the ſame order as in the New Exchange at London. The *Biſiſten*, or jeweller's quarter, ſhews ſo much riches, ſuch a vaſt quantity of diamonds, and all kind of precious ſtones, that they dazzle the ſight. The embroiderers is alſo very glittering, and people walk here as much for diverſion as buſineſs. The markets are moſt of them handſome ſquares, and admirably well provided, perhaps better than in any other part of the world.

I know you'll expect I ſhould ſay ſomething particular of the ſlaves; and you will imagine me half a Turk, when I don't ſpeak of it with the ſame horror

other

other Chriſtians have done before me. But I cannot forbear applauding the humanity of the Turks to theſe creatures; they are never ill uſed, and their ſlavery is, in my opinion, no worſe than ſervitude all over the world. 'Tis true they have no wages; but they give them yearly clothes to a higher value than our ſalaries to our ordinary ſervants. But you'll object that, men buy women *with an eye to evil.* In my opinion they are bought and ſold as publickly and as infamouſly in all our Chriſtian great cities.

I muſt add to the deſcription of Conſtantinople, that the *Hiſtorical Pillar* is no more. It dropped down about two years before I came to this part of the world. I have ſeen no other footſteps of antiquity except the aquæducts, which are ſo vaſt that I am apt to believe they

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are yet more antient than the Greek Empire. The Turks, indeed, have clapped in ſome ſtones with Turkiſh inſcriptions, to give their natives the honour of ſo great a work; but the deceit is eaſily diſcovered.—The other publick buildings are the *Hans* and *Monaſteries*; the firſt are very large and numerous; the ſecond few in number, and not at all magnificent. I had the curioſity to viſit one of them, and to obſerve the devotions of the *Derviſes*, which are as whimſical as any at Rome. Theſe fellows have permiſſion to marry, but are confined to an odd habit, which is only a piece of coarſe white cloth, wrapped about them, with their legs and arms naked. Their order has few other rules, except that of performing their fantaſtick rites, every Tueſday and Friday, which is done in this manner: They meet to-

gether

gether in a large hall, where they all ſtand with their eyes fixed on the ground, and their arms acroſs, while the *Imaum* or preacher reads part of the *Alcoran* from a pulpit, placed in the midſt; and when he has done, eight or ten of them make a melancholy concert with their pipes, which are no unmuſical inſtruments. Then he reads again, and makes a ſhort expoſition on what he has read; after which they ſing and play, 'till their Superior (the only one of them dreſſed in green) riſes and begins a ſort of ſolemn dance. They all ſtand about him in a regular figure, and while ſome play, the others tie their robe (which is very wide) faſt round their waiſt, and begin to turn round with an amazing ſwiftneſs, and yet with great regard to the muſic, moving ſlower or faſter as the tune is played. This laſts above an

hour, without any of them ſhewing the leaſt appearance of giddineſs, which is not to be wondered at, when it is conſidered, they are all uſed to it from their infancy; moſt of them being devoted to this way of life from their birth. There turned amongſt them ſome little Derviſes of ſix or ſeven years old, who ſeemed no more diſordered by that exerciſe than the others. At the end of the ceremony they ſhout out; "*There* "*is no other God, but God, and Maho-* "*met his Prophet:*" after which they kiſs the Superior's hand and retire. The whole is performed with the moſt ſolemn gravity. Nothing can be more auſtere than the form of theſe people; they never raiſe their eyes, and ſeem devoted to contemplation. And as ridiculous as this is in deſcription, there is ſomething touch-

ing

ing in the air of ſubmiſſion and mortifi-
cation they aſſume.——This letter is of
a horrible length; but you may burn it
when you have read enough, &c. &c.

LETTER XLII.

To the Counteſs of ——.

I AM now preparing to leave Conſtantinople, and perhaps you will accuſe me of hypocriſy, when I tell you, 'tis with regret; but as I am uſed to the air, and have learnt the language, I am eaſy here; and as much as I love travelling, I tremble at the inconveniencies attending ſo great a journey, with a numerous family, and a little infant hanging at the breaſt. However, I endeavour, upon this occaſion, to do as I have hitherto done in all the odd turns of my life; turn them, if I can, to my diverſion. In order to this, I ramble every day, wrapped up in my *Ferige* and *Aſmack*, about Conſtantinople, and

amuſe myſelf with ſeeing all that is curious in it. I know you will expect that this declaration ſhould be followed with ſome account of what I have ſeen. But I am in no humour to copy what has been writ ſo often over. To what purpoſe ſhould I tell you, that Conſtantinople is the antient Bizantium? that 'tis at preſent the conqueſt of a race of people, ſuppoſed Scythians? that there are five or ſix thouſand moſques in it? that *Sancta Sophia* was founded by Juſtinian, &c. I'll aſſure you 'tis not for want of learning, that I forbear writing all theſe bright things. I could alſo, with very little trouble, turn over *Knolles* and Sir *Paul Rycaut*, to give you a liſt of Turkiſh Emperors; but I will not tell you what you may find in every author that has writ of this country. I am more inclined, out of a true female ſpirit of

contradiction, to tell you the falſehood of a great part of what you find in authors; as for inſtance, in the admirable Mr. *Hill*, who ſo gravely aſſerts, that he ſaw in *Santa Sophia*, a ſweating pillar, very balſamic for diſordered heads. There is not the leaſt tradition of any ſuch matter; and I ſuppoſe it was revealed to him in viſion, during his wonderful ſtay in the Egyptian Catacombs; for I am ſure he never heard of any ſuch miracle here. 'Tis alſo very pleaſant to obſerve how tenderly he and all his brethren voyage-writers, lament the miſerable confinement of the Turkiſh ladies, who are perhaps more free than any ladies in the univerſe, and are the only women in the world, that lead a life of uninterrupted pleaſure, exempt from cares, their whole time being ſpent in viſiting, bathing, or the agreeable

amuſement of ſpending money and inventing new faſhions. A huſband would be thought mad that exacted any degree of œconomy from his wife, whoſe expences are no way limited but by her own fancy. 'Tis his buſineſs to get money, and her's to ſpend it; and this noble prerogative extends itſelf to the very meaneſt of the ſex. Here is a fellow that carries embroidered handkerchiefs upon his back to ſell. And as miſerable a figure as you may ſuppoſe ſuch a mean dealer; yet I'll aſſure you, his wife ſcorns to wear any thing leſs than cloth of gold; has her ermine furs, and a very handſome ſet of jewels for her head. 'Tis true, they have no places but the bagnios, and theſe can only be ſeen by their own ſex; however, that is a diverſion they take great pleaſure in.

I was,

I was, three days ago, at one of the fineſt in the town, and had the opportunity of ſeeing a Turkiſh bride received there, and all the ceremony uſed on that occaſion, which made me recollect the *Epithalamium* of *Helen*, by *Theocritus*; and it ſeems to me, that the ſame cuſtoms have continued ever ſince. All the ſhe friends, relations and acquaintance of the two families, newly allied, meet at the bagnio; ſeveral others go, out of curioſity, and I believe there were that day two hundred women. Thoſe that were, or had been married, placed themſelves round the rooms, on the marble ſofas; but the virgins very haſtily threw off their cloaths, and appeared without other ornament, or covering, than their own long hair braided with pearl or ribbon. Two of them met the bride at the door, conducted by her mother and another grave relation.

She was a beautiful maid of about ſeventeen, very richly dreſſed, and ſhining with jewels, but was preſently reduced to the ſtate of nature. Two others filled ſilver gilt pots with perfume, and begun the proceſſion, the reſt following in pairs, to the number of thirty. The leaders ſung an *Epithalamium*, anſwered by the others in chorus, and the two laſt led the fair bride, her eyes fixed on the ground, with a charming affectation of modeſty. In this order they marched round the three large rooms of the Bagnio. 'Tis not eaſy to repreſent to you the beauty of this ſight, moſt of them being well proportioned and white ſkinn'd; all of them perfectly ſmooth, and poliſhed by the frequent uſe of bathing. After having made their *tour*, the bride was again led to every matron round the rooms, who ſaluted her with a compliment and a preſent,

ſent, ſome of jewels, others of pieces of ſtuff, handkerchiefs, or little gallantries of that nature, which ſhe thanked them for, by kiſſing their hands. I was very well pleaſed with having ſeen this ceremony; and you may believe me, that the Turkiſh ladies have, at leaſt, as much wit and civility, nay liberty, as among us. 'Tis true, the ſame cuſtoms that give them ſo many opportunities of gratifying their evil inclinations (if they have any) alſo put it very fully in the power of their huſbands to revenge themſelves, if they are diſcovered, and I do not doubt but they ſuffer ſometimes for their indiſcretions in a very ſevere manner. About two months ago, there was found at day-break, not very far from my houſe, the bleeding body of a young woman, naked, only wrapped in a coarſe ſheet, with two wounds of a

knife, one in her ſide, and another in her breaſt. She was not quite cold, and was ſo ſurpriſingly beautiful, that there were very few men in Pera that did not go to look upon her; but it was not poſſible for any body to know her, no woman's face being known. She was ſuppoſed to have been brought, in the dead of night, from the Conſtantinople ſide, and laid there. Very little inquiry was made about the murderer, and the corpſe was privately buried without noiſe. Murder is never purſued by the King's officers, as with us. 'Tis the buſineſs of the next relations to revenge the dead perſon; and if they like better to compound the matter for money (as they generally do) there is no more ſaid of it. One would imagine this defect in their government, ſhould make ſuch tragedies very frequent, yet they are extremely

rare;

rare; which is enough to prove the people not naturally cruel. Neither do I think, in many other particulars, they deſerve the barbarous character we give them. I am well acquainted with a Chriſtian woman of quality, who made it her choice to live with a Turkiſh huſband, and is a very agreeable ſenſible lady. Her ſtory is ſo extraordinary, I cannot forbear relating it; but I promiſe you it ſhall be in as few words as I can poſſibly expreſs it.

She is a Spaniard, and was at Naples with her family, when that kingdom was part of the Spaniſh dominion. Coming from thence in a *Feloucca*, accompanied by her brother, they were attacked by the Turkiſh Admiral, boarded and taken.——And now how ſhall I modeſtly tell you the reſt of her adventure?

The

The ſame accident happened to her, that happen'd to the fair Lucretia ſo many years before her. But ſhe was too good a Chriſtian to kill herſelf, as that Heatheniſh Roman did. The Admiral was ſo much charmed with the beauty, and *long-ſuffering* of the fair captive, that, as his firſt compliment, he gave immediate liberty to her brother and attendants, who made haſte to Spain, and in a few months ſent the ſum of four thouſand pounds ſterling, as a ranſom for his ſiſter. The Turk took the money, which he preſented to her, and told her ſhe was at liberty. But the lady very diſcreetly weighed the different treatment ſhe was likely to find in her native country. Her relations (as the kindeſt thing they could do for her in her preſent circumſtances) would certainly confine her to a nunnery for the reſt of her

days.

days.—Her Infidel lover was very handſome, very tender, very fond of her, and laviſhed at her feet all the Turkiſh magnificence. She anſwered him very reſolutely, that her liberty was not ſo precious to her as her honour, that he could no way reſtore that but by marrying her, and ſhe therefore deſired him to accept the ranſom as her portion, and give her the ſatisfaction of knowing that no man could boaſt of her favours without being her huſband. The admiral was tranſported at this kind offer, and ſent back the money to her relations, ſaying he was too happy in her poſſeſſion. He married her, and never took any other wife, and (as ſhe ſays herſelf) ſhe never had reaſon to repent the choice ſhe made. He left her ſome years after, one of the richeſt widows in Conſtantinople. But there is no remaining

ing honourably a ſingle woman, and that conſideration has obliged her to marry the preſent Capitan Baſſa, (i. e. Admiral) his ſucceſſor.——I am afraid that you will think my friend fell in love with her raviſher; but I am willing to take her word for it, that ſhe acted wholly on principles of honour, tho' I think ſhe might be reaſonably touched at his generoſity, which is often found amongſt the Turks of rank.

'Tis a degree of generoſity to tell the truth, and 'tis very rare that any Turk will aſſert a ſolemn falſehood. I don't ſpeak of the loweſt ſort; for as there is a great deal of ignorance, there is very little virtue amongſt them; and falſe witneſſes are much cheaper than in Chriſtendom, thoſe wretches not being puniſhed (even when they are publickly detected)

detected) with the rigour they ought to be.

Now I am ſpeaking of their law, I don't know, whether I have ever mentioned to you one cuſtom peculiar to their country, I mean, *adoption*, very common amongſt the Turks, and yet more amongſt the Greeks and Armenians. Not having it in their power to give their eſtates to a friend or diſtant relation, to avoid its falling into the Grand Signior's treaſury, when they are not likely to have any children of their own, they chuſe ſome pretty child of either ſex, amongſt the meaneſt people, and carry the child and its parents before the *Cadi*, and there declare they receive it for their heir. The parents, at the ſame time, renounce all future claim to it; a writing is drawn and witneſſed,

and

and a child thus adopted, cannot be dis-inherited. Yet I have ſeen ſome common beggars, that have refuſed to part with their children in this manner, to ſome of the richeſt among the Greeks; (ſo powerful is the inſtinctive affection that is natural to parents!) though the adopting fathers are generally very tender to theſe *children of their ſouls*, as they call them. I own this cuſtom pleaſes me much better than our abſurd one of following our name. Methinks, 'tis much more reaſonable to make happy and rich, an infant whom I educate after my own manner, *brought up* (in the Turkiſh phraſe) *upon my knees*, and who has learnt to look upon me with a filial reſpect, than to give an eſtate to a creature without other merit or relation to me than that of a few letters. Yet this is an abſurdity we ſee frequently practiſed.

tiſed.——Now I have mentioned the Armenians, perhaps it will be agreeable to tell you ſomething of that nation, with which I am ſure you are utterly unacquainted. I will not trouble you with the geographical account of the ſituation of their coúntry, which you may ſee in the maps; or a relation of their antient greatneſs, which you may read in the Roman Hiſtory. They are now ſubject to the Turks; and, being very induſtrious in trade, and encreaſing and multiplying, are diſperſed in great numbers through all the Turkiſh dominions. They were, as they ſay, converted to the Chriſtian religion by St. *Gregory*, and are perhaps the devouteſt Chriſtians in the whole world. The chief precepts of their prieſts enjoin the ſtrict keeping of their Lents, which are, at leaſt, ſeven months in every year, and

are

are not to be diſpenſed with on the moſt emergent neceſſity; no occaſion whatever can excuſe them if they touch any thing more than mere herbs or roots (without oil) and plain dry bread. That is their conſtant diet.——Mr. W——y has one of his interpreters of this nation, and the poor fellow was brought ſo low by the ſeverity of his faſts, that his life was deſpaired of. Yet neither his maſter's commands, nor the doctors entreaties (who declared nothing elſe could ſave his life) were powerful enough to prevail with him to take two or three ſpoonfuls of broth. Excepting this, which may rather be called a cuſtom, than an article of faith, I ſee very little in their religion different from ours. 'Tis true, they ſeem to incline very much to Mr. *Whiſton*'s doctrine; neither do I think the Greek church very diſtant from it,

ſince

ſince 'tis certain, the Holy Spirit's proceeding *only* from the Father, is making a plain ſubordination in the Son.—But the Armenians have no notion of *Tranſubſtantiation*, whatever account Sir *Paul Rycaut* gives of them (which account I am apt to believe was deſigned to compliment our court in 1679) and they have a great horror for thoſe amongſt them that change to the Roman religion. What is moſt extraordinary in their cuſtoms, is their matrimony; a ceremony, I believe, unparallel'd all over the world. They are always promiſed very young; but the eſpouſed never ſee one another, till three days after their marriage. The bride is carried to church with a cap on her head, in the faſhion of a large trencher, and over it a red ſilken veil, which covers her all over to her feet. The prieſt aſks the bridegroom whether

he is contented to marry that woman, *be ſhe deaf, be ſhe blind?* Theſe are the literal words; to which having anſwered *yes*, ſhe is led home to his houſe, accompanied with all the friends and relations on both ſides, ſinging and dancing, and is placed on a cuſhion in the corner of the ſofa; but her veil is never lifted up, not even by her huſband. There is ſomething ſo odd and monſtrous in theſe ways, that I could not believe them till I had enquired of ſeveral Armenians myſelf, who all aſſured me of the truth of them, particularly one young fellow who wept when he ſpoke of it, being promiſed by his mother to a girl that he muſt marry in this manner, tho' he proteſted to me, he had rather die than ſubmit to this ſlavery, having already figured his bride to himſelf, with all the deformities in nature.——I fancy

I ſee

I ſee you bleſs yourſelf at this terrible relation. I cannot conclude my letter with a more ſurpriſing ſtory, yet 'tis as ſeriouſly true, as that I am,

Dear ſiſter,

Yours, &c. &c.

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